Byzantium and the Modern Greek Identity

Edited by David Ricks and Paul Magdalino

Centre for Hellenic Studies, King's College London

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David Ricks and Paul Magdalino

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Contents

Editors' preface vii

1. From Christian Roman emperors to the glorious Greek ancestors 1
Alexis Politis

2. Aspects of modern Greek historiography of Byzantium 15
George Huxley

3. On the intellectual content of Greek nationalism: Paparrigopoulos, Byzantium and the Great Idea 25
Paschalis M. Kitromilides

4. Byzantine law as practice and as history in the nineteenth century 35
Caroula Argyriadis-Kervégan

5. Byzantium and the Greek Language Question in the nineteenth century 49
Peter Mackridge

6. *Metamorphoseon permulti libri*: Byzantine literature translated into modern Greek 63
Panagiotis A. Agapitos

7. 'As *Byzantine* then as it is today': *Pope Joan* and Roïdis's Greece 75
Ruth Macrides

8. Papadiamantis, ecumenism and the theft of Byzantium 91
Robert Shannan Peckham

9. Two cheers for Byzantium: equivocal attitudes in the poetry of Palamas and Cavafy 105
Anthony Hirst

10. Byzantium and the novel in the twentieth century: from Penelope Delta to Maro Douka 119
Marianna Spanaki

11. 'Our glorious Byzantinism': Papatzonis, Seferis, and the rehabilitation of Byzantium in postwar Greek poetry 131
Roderick Beaton

12. Byzantium in contemporary Greece: the Neo-Orthodox current of ideas 141
Vasilios N. Makrides

13. The restoration of Thessaloniki's Byzantine monuments and their place in the modern city 155
Eftychia Kourkoutidou-Nikolaïdou

14. 'Thessaloniki and Life' 169
Nikos Gabriel Pentzikis (translated by Leo Marshall)

Index 181

Editors' preface

One possible reaction to this volume's title might be surprise that the topic could merit scholarly investigation. Of course Byzantium is (at the very least) part of the Modern Greek identity, it might quite reasonably be said, given that Greece is a country whose population is, almost in its entirety, of the Orthodox Christian confession and whose church architecture, iconography, music and liturgy have deep Byzantine roots. The view, indeed, that it is the Byzantine, and not the ancient, heritage which is modern Greece's central and enduring source of identity has had powerful advocates. One is Mr Zissimos Lorenzatos, who in his eightieth year (1994) brought out two rich volumes of collected essays, many of them revolving around this question; another was the late Philip Sherrard (1924–95), who was for some years Lecturer in the History of the Orthodox Church at King's College London, and who has been one of the most influential advocates of the Byzantine tradition in the West.[1]

Yet the turn towards Byzantium that these writers eloquently represent is itself a self-conscious and distinctively modern phenomenon, a response, *inter alia*, to the challenges of independent Greece; and the colloquium out of which this volume has grown, convened by David Ricks in May 1996, aimed to look dispassionately at a number of aspects of Byzantium which have (depending on the facts of the matter, but also on the scholarly idiom adopted) been inherited, appropriated, or indeed contested in Greece since 1821. Such questions have become familiar in contemporary classical studies, yet this sort of look at the relationship between Byzantium and independent Greece is still relatively uncommon.[2] Attempts to examine the

In the notes that follow, as in the notes to each paper in this volume, all works in English have London as place of publication unless otherwise indicated; all works in Greek, likewise, have Athens as place of publication unless specified to the contrary.

[1] See Z. Lorenzatos, *Meletes* (2 vols, 1994). Philip Sherrard's lifelong advocacy of the Eastern Church was initiated in *The Greek East and the Latin West: a Study in the Christian Tradition* (1959) and continued in a wealth of publications thereafter.

[2] See for example in the classical field G. Van Steen, 'Aristophanes on the modern Greek stage', *Dialogos*, 2 (1995), 71–90.

Byzantine–modern Greek connection are still unusual – number 2 in the present series, *Digenes Akrites: New Approaches to Byzantine Heroic Poetry*, represents in part an exception – and it is more often the case that such a connection is either assumed or ignored.[3]

Not, of course, that the 1996 colloquium was the first to examine the question in detail: indeed, a Dumbarton Oaks colloquium in 1991 bore the title, 'The Familiar Stranger: Byzantium in Modern Greece'. In one of the papers given there, Panagiotis A. Agapitos identified several relevant areas of cultural activity: historiography, philology and literature, on the one hand; and theology, architecture, the visual arts and music, on the other.[4] The reader of the present volume will find that (for reasons largely beyond the editors' control) it concentrates rather more on the first of these two branches, and the written word accordingly receives disproportionate coverage.[5] One kind of corrective may be supplied, for example, by the catalogue to the 1997 exhibition, 'Photis Kontoglou: Reflections of Byzantium in the Twentieth Century'; but it cannot be emphasized too strongly that this volume hopes to stimulate a broader debate on the question which will take in a wider range of modern Greek *mentalités* and cultural forms than is discussed here.[6]

That said, the present contributions give some idea of just how varied responses to Byzantium on the part of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Greeks have been. The extent of the intellectual revolution whereby Byzantium has come to be placed at the heart of the Greek national identity is brought out in Alexis Politis's opening paper (Chapter 1), where it is shown how deeply Greek intellectuals of the Enlightenment were imbued with a Gibbonian animus against Byzantium as the mere degeneracy of Rome: as a past which might happily be ignored, but which might with greater profit be erased from the national consciousness. Further light on this current of ideas is shed by George Huxley's discussion of the modern Greek historiography of Byzantium (Chapter 2), with its reminder that the development of a scholarly interest in Byzantium from the mid-nineteenth century has its

[3] Ed. R. Beaton and D. Ricks, Variorum, 1993. This earlier volume attests to one important facet of Byzantium in the modern Greek literary consciousness (not mentioned below in order to avoid duplication): the wish, in independent Greece as in other new nations, to endow the literature with a medieval 'epic'; see here especially the papers by G. Saunier, 'Is there such a thing as an "akritic song"? Problems in the classification of modern Greek narrative songs' (pp. 139–49) and D. Ricks, '*Digenes Akrites* as literature' (pp. 161–70).

[4] P. A. Agapitos, 'Byzantine literature and Greek philologists in the nineteenth century', *Classica et Medievalia*, 63 (1992), 231–60.

[5] Contributions solicited on local antiquarianism, folklore, liturgical music and painting were, regrettably, never received.

[6] Introduction by N. Zias, with select bibliography (Athens: Foundation for Hellenic Culture, 1997).

own contours and motivations, ones which must be disentangled by today's scholar. And Paschalis M. Kitromilides (Chapter 3) shows how important it is to examine the views of Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos at first hand if we are to understand how, often in a vulgarized form, they came to exert their enormous influence on views of Byzantium in the public mind in the Greek-speaking world.

The next three papers concern important and perhaps neglected areas of modern Greek culture which have engaged with Byzantium. Caroula Argyriadis-Kervégan (Chapter 4) illustrates the extent to which the rich but problematic inheritance of Byzantine law became an object of dispute in nineteenth-century legal theory and practice. Peter Mackridge (Chapter 5) shows how the Byzantine period became one of the key battlegrounds between modern students of the history of the Greek language, in a debate of arcane controversialism yet with quite a wide influence.[7] And Panagiotis A. Agapitos (Chapter 6) draws attention, not without a degree of scholarly disquiet, to a surprisingly flourishing branch of the contemporary book market in Greece: translations of Byzantine works for the general reader.

The five papers that follow concentrate on highly self-conscious literary responses to Byzantium in modern Greek literature. Ruth Macrides (Chapter 7) shows how Roïdis's celebrated and controversial novel *Pope Joan* (1866) stands squarely with the Enlightenment consensus on Byzantium, yet does so in a teasing and playful way. Robert Shannan Peckham (Chapter 8) takes modern Greece's greatest prose writer and one of the two writers most inextricably associated with Byzantium, Alexandros Papadiamantis, and cautions against a critical tendency to see him as an untroubled apologist for the Greek East and for anti-Occidentalism. Anthony Hirst (Chapter 9) contrasts two great poetic contemporaries and rivals, Kostis Palamas and C. P. Cavafy, showing in what different spirits Byzantine history can be quarried by the modern poet.[8] Marianna Spanaki (Chapter 10) compares the presentation of Byzantium in novels by Penelope Delta and Maro Douka, two best-selling women writers, one at each end of the twentieth century, but both of them writing in times of Balkan conflict. Roderick Beaton, finally (Chapter 11), traces the way in which two poets of a later generation, Takis Papatzonis and George Seferis, come to formulate a notion of the 'Byzantine spirit' as something particularly to be valued in a deracinated modern world.

[7] An up-to-date discussion free of *parti-pris* is now available: G. Horrocks, *Greek. A History of the Language and its Speakers* (1997).

[8] It is striking – even allowing for the fact that the language of modern Greek poetry allows it, in one way, a freer conversation with the Byzantine past – that Byzantium is, by contrast, highly marginal in, say, English poetry. See D. Ricks, 'Simpering Byzantines, Grecian goldsmiths, et al.: some appearances of Byzantium in English poetry', in R. Cormack (ed.), *Through the Looking Glass: British Perceptions of Byzantium* (Variorum, forthcoming).

The last three contributions, each in its own way, take us away from the area of detached intellectual contemplation into the hurly-burly of modern life. Vasilios N. Makrides (Chapter 12) surveys the strong Neo-Orthodox revival of recent years, with particular attention to its two most controversial figures, the theologians Christos Giannaras and Giannis Zouraris. Taking the case of the city of Thessaloniki, the second city of the modern Greek state as it was once the second city of the Byzantine Empire, Eftychia Kourkoutidou-Nikolaïdou (Chapter 13) examines the problems surrounding the restoration of Byzantine monuments which are at once revered houses of worship and archaeological monuments in the crowded environment of a modern city. Finally, as an illustration of how establishing the Byzantine presence in modern Greece is at bottom an act of imagination, the volume includes Leo Marshall's translation of a short text on Thessaloniki by the late Nikos Gabriel Pentzikis (Chapter 14), perhaps the most floridly Byzantinizing of twentieth-century Greek writers.[9]

The ways in which modern Greek culture has conducted a conversation with the ancient Greek past, striving to assimilate, interrogate, emulate, or even annihilate it, have been the subject of many discussions. Just how diverse that culture's responses have been to the Byzantium millennium, understood as the modern nation's past, has less often been discussed, especially in the English-language literature. Yet the centrality of the question emerges even from the limited sample of topics examined in the present volume, which in their different ways attest to modern Greek culture's combativeness, resourcefulness and imagination. The editors dedicate this collection of studies to the memory of Robert Browning, a scholar sympathetic as few others have been to Byzantium and modern Greece alike.

David Ricks and Paul Magdalino

King's College London and University of St Andrews
1998

[9] See G. Thaniel, *Homage to Byzantium: the Life and Work of Nikos Gabriel Pentzikis* (Minneapolis, 1983).

1

From Christian Roman emperors to the glorious Greek ancestors

Alexis Politis

We Greeks today have great difficulty in grasping that the sense of the continuity of the nation, as we encounter it in the general climate or at school, was an invention of the mid-nineteenth century, and that the overwhelming majority of Greek intellectuals who envisioned, and saw the realization of, an independent Greek state felt a cultural and political affinity with the ancient Greeks alone, and considered the entire Byzantine period to be part of the history of the Greeks under foreign subjugation, a mere continuation of Roman rule.

Indeed, if one had thought to conduct an opinion poll among men of letters over the first half of the nineteenth century, as in effect K. Th. Dimaras later did on numerous occasions, one would easily have established that most, and among them the most coherent and committed advocates of national independence, would have declared that Greek independence met its end in 338 BC with the battle of Chaeronea, in the wake of which came the various conquerors: the Macedonians, the Romans and, last and worst, the Turks.[1] The War of Independence and the new state had as their ideological basis the claim of succession to the glorious ancient past: all their symbols, and even the name of the inhabitants of the country who rose in arms, were accommodated to this claim. Ancient history and culture were all-pervasive in the world of letters before the war, and the Romantic conception of a Greek Byzantium and of the continuity of the nation only took root much later – at least a generation or so after Paparrigopoulos and

[1] See generally C. Th. Dimaras, *La Grèce au temps des lumières* (Geneva, 1969), *Neoellinikos Diafotismos* (1977), *Ellinikos romantismos* (1982), *Istorika frontismata* (ed. P. Polemi, 1992). For attitudes to the Macedonians see briefly my *Romantika chronia. Ideologies kai nootropies 1830–1880* (1993), 40–43.

Zambelios (discussed by George Huxley and Paschalis M. Kitromilides elsewhere in the present volume – Chapters 2 and 3) – and without ever supplanting the ancient heritage.

All this is well known, however it may be played down in the school curriculum, let alone in the ideological make-up of the average educated Greek. But one question is still unanswered: just when did this sense of the direct succession of the modern Greeks from the ancients – that is, without the mediation of Byzantium – come to be formed? And with what ideological tendencies are we to connect it?

I have mentioned the opinions of the learned. For the illiterate and the inhabitants of rural areas, information is minimal. Its very paucity, however, is, I believe, testimony in itself: we are not talking about lost evidence, evidence which was not collected when it could still have been, but of evidence which never existed. The rural population had in its world picture only a dim idea of the past, for it lived the sense of time through the annual cycle of sowing and harvest or of the life cycle: the linear development of time, of such significance for us, was but rarely visible, and then merely a reflection of things known by hearsay with no wider importance.[2]

Let us begin with a passage by John Cam Hobhouse, a comment on the striking presence of the ancients in the texts of the revolutionary marches; it condenses first-hand experience and knowledge of the texts:

> There may appear a triteness in reminding the Greeks of Leonidas; but the truth is, that of him, and of the other heroes of antiquity, the generality of the people have but a very confused notion, and that very few of them trace the period of their former glory farther back than the days of the Greek Emperors. Those who are most fond of recurring to past times, dwell on the power and merits of those Princes, and begin their history with the great Constantine, the Emperor of the Greeks, (Ὁ Μέγας Κωνσταντῖνος, ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ῥωμαίων). All their hopes are directed towards the restoration of the Byzantine kingdom, in the person of any Christian, but more particularly a Christian of their own church, and I believe that they have never for an instant entertained the project of establishing an independent confederacy on the model of their ancient republics. Their views have naturally been turned towards Russia for more than half a century, and everyone is acquainted with their two desperate attempts to create a diversion in favour of that power in the heart of European Turkey.[3]

[2] This holds even for matters closer to the rural experience such as banditry and *armatolismos*: see my 'Katagrafes proforikis istorias, 1824 (Kleftes kai armatoloi)' in *I Epanastasi tou 1821, Meletes sti Mnimi tis Despoinas Themeli-Katifori* (1994), 43–61. What Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos records about 'popular feeling' with respect to history (see his *Istorikai pragmateiai* [1888], 201, and Dimaras, *Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos* [1986], 383–4) consists either of learned views or, in the case of Vlachavas, of later embroideries.

[3] *A Journey through Albania and the Other Provinces of Turkey* (1813), 588.

Fifteen years later, in early 1824, a comparable witness, this time an American named Breck, writing to an unknown correspondent, tries to explain why he is not a Philhellene. Having observed that the ancient Greeks had been for the most part slaves, that the country had been for centuries subjugated by a series of conquerors and that its racial composition had changed, that the ancient masterpieces were the work of a tiny nucleus of free men, he concludes:

> The modern Greeks know nothing of Thucydides, Aristotle, Solon and other worthies of olden times; their traditions go no further than the Byzantine Empire, and their wish is not to be republicans, but to have an Emperor or absolute master of their own religion.[4]

Before we proceed, however, we shall call a third witness, a contemporary of Hobhouse, von Stackelberg:

> The fame of the Hellenes is yet alive among them. By that name they describe anything heroic and slightly supernatural, but they are far from seeing themselves as heirs to the glory of those who dwelt there in ancient times. The simple shepherd holds the Greeks to be the ancestors of the Franks, and considers them to have been foreigners and gifted craftsmen who were once lords and masters of the country; and it is thus that he explains the frequent visits by foreign travellers and the importance they ascribe to these relics of ancient civilization. No matter that in this he is refuted by the self-confidence of other Greeks.[5]

We know of course that the identification of the Hellenes with a race of giants was widespread; we know too that the folk equation: 'Hellene = heathen' (or, in this present example: 'Hellene = infidel Frank') derives from Church tradition. 'Ye are not Hellenes,' Kosmas Aitolos would say, 'ye are not impious, heretical, atheistical: ye are pious Orthodox Christians.'[6] But the connection of the Hellenes with the Franks is probably a chance thought: it is unknown to me from elsewhere, and it helps to show just how vague a conception of the past exists among the rural population, varying with circumstance, or according to who is asking the question.

If we try now to relate our three witnesses, we may consider that those populations without access to the modern education of the Enlightenment had but a vague idea of the past, which they connected with Byzantium and differentiated sharply from the ancient, pagan world: this is precisely the

[4] See D. N. Robinson, *America in Greece* (New York, 1948), 143–4. The letter, dated 22.1.24, is in a library in Philadelphia; I have no further information on Breck, but his democratic and republican views are clear.

[5] M. von Stackelberg, *Der Apollotempel zu Bassae in Arcadien* (Rome, 1826), 14.

[6] See I. B. Menounos, *Kosma tou Aitolou Didaches* (1979), 115–16 and, further, for a still clearer use of Hellene = pagan, p. 298.

view that the Church gives its flock, the view which identifies 'us' with the Christians, which considers as belonging to 'our race' all those who place at the world's apex the Virgin or, at a worldly level, the Ecumenical Patriarchate.[7]

Among men of learning, however, and through the ancient Greek language, the Church had no difficulty, at least until the end of the eighteenth century, in sometimes identifying its flock with the descendants of the Hellenes. 'And we, the once great and notable race of the Hellenes': so Samouil Chantzeris from the pulpit of the Patriarchate in the 1760s;[8] or we read in the *Proskynetarion* of the Monastery of the Great Lavra (1770), of 'the worthy descendants of the Hellenes, the *Romaioi*'.[9] But the contradiction was not particularly evident, given that the essential characteristic of 'we' resided not in the past, in descent, but in the present, in faith. This emerges clearly from the *Garden of Graces* by Kaisarios Dapontes.

Encountering in Constantinople some columns from the time of Constantine and Theodosius, Dapontes dubs them 'relics of our sway of yesteryear'. In Samos, relics of an ancient fortress are 'each one, a mirror of the Hellenic valour;/I looked on each and wondered at them and bewailed/ our race of today and was full of tears'. Below, an ancient column is 'a wondrous spectacle, a clarion of the valour/of our old forefathers, but also of their wisdom'. Note the subtle but crucial distinction between 'old forefathers' and 'of yesteryear' (literally 'of the day before yesterday': *prochthesinis*). In one more passage, finally, in which Dapontes speaks of the villages of Samos as all being Christian ones (no Jews, Turks, Armenians, Franks, Lutherans: Orthodoxy everywhere), it is clear that race and faith are one, that 'we' are the Orthodox.[10]

We should bear in mind, then, that the link with classical times was by no means dominant: all the historical works written or available in the Greek-speaking world until the third quarter of the eighteenth century (apart from

[7] 'An ornament of the Orthodox race' is how the learned monk Anthimos Olympiotis describes the Virgin at the end of the eighteenth century: cf. MS no. 220, p. 74; for the MSS see V. Skouvaras, *Olympiotissa* (1967), 413–16; we find a similar expression in Kosmas: see Menounos, *Kosma tou Aitolou Didaches*, 222. 'I am the race', Elenko Emphiedzidena, the mistress of the Patriarch Evgenios, used to say after the Revolution, 'indicating that it was she who led by the nose the leader of the race': see M. I. Gedeon, *Patriarchikis istorias mnimeia III* (1922), 6.

[8] In the *Diatagai Gamon* (Constantinople, 1767), repr. by G. Valetas, *Logoi patriotikoi aplosynthetoi ... Samouil Chantzeri* (1948), 55–6, 85.

[9] Venice, 1772, 158. Quoted here from E. Legrand, *Bibliographie Hellénique du 19ème siècle*, II (Paris, 1918), 768. Half a century earlier, the Patriarchate, condemning Methodios Anthrakites in 1723 for his flirtation with Enlightenment ideas, added to the accusations his inadequacy in 'the discourse of the Hellenes', showing the Church's adherence to the ancient language; see conveniently M. Kalinderis, *O kodix mitropoleos Sisaniou kai Siatistis* (Thessaloniki, 1974), 105.

[10] References to the edition by G. Sofoklis (1880), 118, 115, 117, 141. There is a new edition by G. P. Savidis (1995).

the translation of Rollin, which is in a different category) have as their subject the Christian past and leave ancient Hellenism outside their perspective; they are a continuation of the tradition of histories of the world since the Creation. Dapontes's *Book of Kingdoms*, a metrical descendant, essentially, of pseudo-Dorotheos's *Chronographer*, begins with the birth of Christ; and the theocentric mentality is yet more clearly reflected in another work of compilation, the *Geographical History*, which, having begun with a description of the world, continues with one of Paradise and Hades.[11] And other works we know of begin from the time of Julius Caesar.[12]

Even from our limited knowledge of eighteenth-century Greek libraries it is clear that the *Vyzantis* series is among the very few historical works often encountered.[13] It is characteristic that in 1672 the French Ambassador in Constantinople, the Marquis de Nointel, gives the Patriarch (the bibliophile Dionysios IV Mouselimis) a set of the French edition.[14] (One hundred and twenty years later a French consul brought as a gift volumes of the *Encyclopédie*.[15]) William Martin Leake, in Ioannina in 1805, writes of the libraries there: 'There is a collection of books also in the metropolitan church, but the Fathers and Byzantine history are almost the only works which the kalogheri have to boast of.'[16] We know too that Katartzis recommends the reading of the *Vyzantis*, and that it remained in use to the time of the Revolution at least – though from 1809 on in the light of Korais's comment that 'it has provoked in Greeks of sense nothing but grief at the foolishness of the Greco-Roman emperors'.[17] But, above all, the six-volume

[11] MS in the Xiropotamos Monastery, description by S. Lambros, 223–4. Some characteristic excerpts appear in Lambros, *Collection des romans grecs* (Paris, 1880), xcix, and in Legrand, *Dakikai efimerides*, I (Paris, 1880), φε′–φθ′ and II (Paris, 1881) 40–41. Description and sample of the *Geographical History*: ibid., III (Paris, 1888), lvii–lxxi.

[12] In fact, few of these works are known or accessible. See however the *Epitomi tis ierokosmikis istorias* of Nektarios of Jerusalem (1677), ed. P. F. Christopoulou 1990 (with an important study by M. I. Manousakas), or the materials in K. N. Sathas, *Mesaioniki Vivliothiki* (Venice, 1872), III. For a general survey, see D. A. Zakythinos, *Metavyzantina kai Nea Ellinika* (1978), 23–66.

[13] I base myself on the library catalogues in the National Research Centre, Athens.

[14] See O. Augustinos, *French Odysseys* (Baltimore, 1994), 82.

[15] P. Echinard, *Grecs et philhéllènes à Marseille* (Marseilles, 1973), 8–9, n.24.

[16] *Travels in Northern Greece*, IV (1835), 148. The following year Chateaubriand finds a couple of volumes in the Archbishopric of Mistra: *Itinéraire de Paris à Jerusalem* (repr. Paris, 1964), 89–90.

[17] A. Korais, *Prolegomena stous archaious Ellines syngrafeis*, 1 (1985), 328. Of more or less the same period (1807) is the negative remark of his friend Etienne Clavier, *Histoire des premiers temps de la Grèce*, I (Paris, 1822), 23. For Katartzis see *Ta evriskomena* (ed. C. Th. Dimaras, 1970), 51. In 1808 Konstantinos Oikonomos was still recommending the *Vyzantis*: see K. Lappas, '"Nouthesiai patros pros yion." Mia anekdoti metafrasi tou Kon. Oikonomou', *Mesaionika kai nea Ellinika*, 2 (1986), 322. So too was Daniil Filippidis: see his *Geografikon tis Roumounias*, Ib (Leipzig, 1816), 14–15; while in 1820 Kodrikas acquires a copy from a Parisian bookseller for Dimitrios Postolakas: see F. K. Bouboulidis, 'Anekdotoi epistolai Kodrika pros

redaction in 'our common idiom' by Ioannis Stanos (Venice 1767) bears witness to continuing interest in this work; and, like the Byzantine chronographers, Stanos begins with the Creation and ends with his own day.[18]

This Christian perspective on the past takes root in the sense of the present: the world is God's work, its history the conflict between faith and infidelity, the central human problem salvation. Curiosity about the past, then, contracts into a broad picture of the fortunes of the Faith, on the one hand, and, on the other, into biographical details from the chronographers which concern only small circles of the educated – which is why many such works never saw print. For the many, for the illiterate rural population, the general schema holds that:

> The good God sent St Constantine and founded a Christian kingdom, and the Christians had this kingdom for one thousand one hundred and fifty years. Then God took the kingdom from the Christians and brought the Turk from the East and gave it to him for our own good ... For God knew that the other kingdoms do harm to our faith and that the Turk harms us not ... and God has the Turk as our guard dog.[19]

In Enlightenment thought, by contrast, the past had another meaning: it was the fortunes of humanity, a pendulum between the right and the wrong; the future was for the improvement of this life. A good representative of the new mentality is Ioannis Pringos. Reared in the old ways, he found himself a merchant in Holland, where he learned to read and amassed a library, coming into contact with contemporary currents. A little after the first Russo-Turkish war, in September 1773, he writes:

> The *Romaioi* say that it is through their sins that they fell to the Turk. But if this was so, then the whole of Europe is guilty of like sins; yet they keep their own countries because they have taken care to keep their own countries. If the *Romaioi* too had taken care, they would not have lost theirs.

At another (earlier?) moment we find ourselves witnesses of this daring thought:

> May the Lord God have mercy on us to set us free, for that we lost our kingdom through our sins. But I say: through our ungovernability. And again I say: are all the rest not sinners, but we the only sinners?[20]

Postolaka', *Epistimoniki Epetiris Filosofikis Scholis Panepistimiou Athinon*, 21 (1970–71), 54–5, 72, 80, 88.

[18] That is, to 1709; he had originally intended to go up to 1718: see N. G. Svoronos, 'Ioannis Stanos', *Athina*, 49 (1939), 233–42.

[19] Menounos, *Kosma Aitolou Didaches*, 269–70.

[20] V. Skouvaras, *Ioannis Pringos* (1964), 190, 189. It is worthy of note that the second quotation is written in a copy of Niketas Choniates.

Pringos's contemporary Dimitrios Katartzis is the representative *par excellence* of the new tendency, enlightened despotism. His intellectual formation and his high position in the social scale make him a unique case. Hemmed in by the phanariot aristocracy, he had an influence only on his own small circle: his works remained unpublished until recently, but in them we may set the beginnings of modern Greek thought. Katartzis is, for example, the first systematically to use the word *ethnos* in the singular in the place of *genos* (which he uses very rarely); the first to make a clear distinction between the *Romioi* and the other Christian subject peoples of the Ottomans. He has, then, a different view of the past. He writes of one man of letters that:

> Two *ethni*, the Hellenic and the Roman, covering two thousand and more years between them, he holds to be one, the Hellenic, simply because the latter descends from the former; but they differ one from the other in fortune and constitution and religion and customs and language and conduct, even in their clothing and utensils.

This in 1787, the mature reflection of a man approaching sixty. About four years earlier Katartzis had written:

> What is more, when a *Romios* reflects that he is descended from Pericles, Themistocles and like Hellenes, or from the relatives of Theodosius, Belisarius, Narses, the Bulgar-Slayer, Tsimiskes and so many other great Romans, or is in the line of some saint or his relative, how can he not love the descendants of these and other great men?[21]

There is, then, a sense of time, a sense of the boundary between antiquity and Byzantium, based not only on Christianity but on language. There is also an awareness of national formation which seems close to modern views. Note, however, the crucial absence of the notion of national independence, the perspective of the nation-state. Nowhere in Katartzis's writings do we find a hint of these – something doubtless explained by his position at court.

This at the height of the Russo-Turkish wars. In contemporary chronicles, in the numerous texts addressed to, or prompted by, Catherine the Great, in numerous texts of a personal character, the sudden hope of a different lot is everywhere present. Nowhere, however, do we meet with the notion of national independence, let alone political autonomy: hopes are for a Christian ruler not of Greek origin; for an Orthodox ruler; sometimes for an enlightened monarch.[22] And before the Treaty of Jassy in 1792, indeed, it

[21] See 'Gnothi sauton' and 'Symvoli stous neous ...', *Ta evriskomena*, 104, 45.

[22] See above all *Iketiria tou genous ton Graikon. Pros pasan tin christianikin Evropin* (probably 1771), repr. in F. Iliou, *Prosthikes stin elliniki viviografia*, I (1973), 290–300, and especially the phrase, 'Vouchsafe, Lady, to give us thy grandson Constantine for our sovereign, this is all that our entire race beseeches of thee (for the race of our emperors has been extinguished).' This passage was prompted in 1790: see W. Eton, *A Survey of the Turkish Empire* (1798), 358, and P.

would have been difficult even for the most advanced thinkers to think otherwise. In what Dimaras terms the critical decade of the 1790s,[23] however, with the progress of the French Revolution and the hardening of the Russian stand against it – and here the events in Poland must have had a decisive influence[24] – the search for some other solution began.

Meanwhile, Enlightenment ideas had become not only more established but the tool of a social group with ever-growing strength in the Balkans, the merchant class. The passing of considerable economic power into its hands had an effect on both the traditional ruling class and indeed the patriarchates. It is from the conflict between these two sides in this decade that the new idea of a nation in search of national independence emerged. This idea, however, entailed a national consciousness with Western affinities and foundations. The ancient world would no longer be simply that of the ancestors but the defining pole of national existence: 'the Hellenizing of the *Romioi*' might sum up the ideological significance of the 1790s.

These changes took place by leaps and bounds: in some cases people did not grasp them at the time. In fact, the eclipse of Byzantium can be seen only in part, as the glamour of the ancients grows. The *Modern Geography* of Philippidis and Konstantas makes, I think, a good point of departure: in the 'Brief chronological and historical summary of the changes of Greece' which introduces the geographical description, the Byzantine period is called the 'Empire of the Hellenes', but has very little space devoted to it, and indeed contains a description of the successors of Alexios Komnenos as 'unworthy and bloodthirsty'.[25] Byzantium is thus included in Greek history but in no flattering way – this attempt at compromise, a step beyond Katartzis, had no successors.

Three years later, in 1794, another pupil of Katartzis, Panagiotis Kodrikas, repudiates his view more vigorously. Not persuaded of the linguistic autonomy of the 'Romaic tongue', he attempts to show that 'unhappy Greece ... once she started to decline from her former glory ... started little by little to lose ... the ancient nobility of her tongue', and that 'the successive

M. Kitromilides, 'War and political consciousness: theoretical implications of eighteenth-century Greek historiography' in *East Central European Society and War in the Pre-Revolutionary Eighteenth Century* , ed. G. E. Rothenberg et al. (New York, 1982), 351–70; H. Ragsdale, 'Evaluating the traditions of Russian aggression: Catherine II and the Greek project', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 66 (1988), 91–117; and Franco Venturi, *Settecento riformatore*, III (*La prima crisa dell' Antico Regime (1768–1776)* (Turin, 1979), with material on Antonios Ghikas, the probable writer of the *Iketiria*.

[23] Dimaras, 'Deka chronia ellinikis paideias stin istoriki tous prooptiki, 1791–1800', in *Neoellinikos Diafotismos*, 277–62.

[24] Closely followed by the *Efimeris* of the Poulios brothers, repr. KEMNE (1995), with introduction by L. Vranoussis.

[25] D. Filippidis and G. Konstantas, *Neoteriki Geografia* (ed. A. Koumarianou, 1988), 103–5.

invasions and enslavements which she experienced at the hands of various nations, whether Macedonians, Romans, or Goths' brought her language into desuetude. The passage culminates:

> when the Greek dialect was already in such a state, mutilated and transformed, as piteously was also its mistress the Roman Kingdom, there came next, alas! the most bitter Heavenly scourge, and the unavoidable outcome of the political instability of the *Romaioi*.[26]

This ideological configuration demands a word by way of analysis. Ancient Greece is credited with its civilization; the Roman Kingdom is accepted, but the Turks are metaphorically considered a punishment for its sins – all this prefacing a translation of a work which subverts the Old Testament, and in which Montesquieu and the *Encyclopédie* are referred to. The overt rejection of the vernacular language takes on a clearer meaning when seen in relation to the esteem for the language cultivated by 'the present Leaders of our race':[27] this support for enlightened despotism is more prominent in Kodrikas's later thought, once he discerns the might of the merchant class and its intellectual leader, Korais.[28]

The following year, 1795, an anonymous translation of Montesquieu was printed in Leipzig: *Researches into the Progress and Fall of the Romans*. The picture of Byzantium given there is well known: Montesquieu, with Voltaire,[29] is its principal critic before Gibbon. The preface to the translation contains the following statement:

> Everyone I suppose knows that there was once a Greek Kingdom (Γραικικὸν Βασίλειον), that it was captured, and that we have since been enslaved, scattered, and left in our present condition. Yet has anyone examined this kingdom's beginnings? has anyone examined its progress? has anyone examined its changes? has anyone indeed examined the causes of its destruction? If I do not say, no-one, then I say perhaps one in ten thousand.

The translator concludes: 'I hope, finally, if any support and help be given me by the race, to translate other books which do not contain myths and curious stories, but which have a view to the enlightenment and benefit of our race.'[30] (Interestingly, the second translator, in 1836, adopts Korais's term *Graikoromaios* for *Graikos*.[31])

[26] See G. G. Ladas and A. D. Chatzidimos, *Elliniki Vivliografia ton eton 1791–1795* (1971), 316–17.

[27] Ibid., 320, 321, 324.

[28] See A. Politis, 'Patris, Alitheia. Ena axioma tou P. Kodrika kai kapoies parallages tou ston dekato enato aiona' in *Zitimata istorias ton neoellinikon grammaton* (Thessaloniki, 1994), 265–71.

[29] Good summary in Augustinos, *French Odysseys*, 137ff.

[30] Ladas and Chatzidimos, *Elliniki Vivliografia*, 357.

[31] *Skepseis peri tou megaleiou kai tis ptoseos ton Romaion* (1836): the translator is the otherwise unknown G. A. Therinos.

In 1798, an eventful year in which the crisis reached its height because of the French presence in the Orient and the violent reaction from the Patriarchate, Korais himself decided to intervene. The stimulus was the *Paternal Exhortation*, a pamphlet printed that year by the patriarchate which gave legitimacy to Ottoman rule:

> Our Lord in his infinite mercy and wisdom, in order to keep yet untainted the holy and orthodox faith of us the pious, and in order to be the salvation of all, raised from nothing this mighty kingdom of the Ottomans over the kingdom of us the Romans, which had begun in some wise to fall away from its orthodox beliefs.[32]

Korais reacts against the spirit, of course, but also against the view of history displayed; on his view, the fall of Byzantium derived

> not from divine providence, but from the imprudent folly of the Greco-Roman Emperors. They, quite unlike the prudent Kings of Russia, having trampled the laws, burdened their subjects with insupportable taxes, polluted the Imperial court with murders and massacres of their relatives, and having been transformed from kings into theologians ... gradually increased the power of the contemptible province of the Turks until they sat them on the very throne of Byzantium.[33]

Things have come full circle. Korais, who had chosen *Graikoi* as his appellation for his compatriots, and who rejected at every turn the word *Romaios*, now coins the neologism 'Greco-Roman (Γραικορωμαῖος – the spelling without double ρ perhaps to indicate the neologism), clearly aware that when Europeans refer to 'Greeks' they mean not only the ancients but the Orthodox inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire. But as *Romaioi* suggested the Roman Catholics, Korais tried to find a new solution, convinced as ever of the virtue of linguistic reforms (see Peter Mackridge's paper in the present volume – Chapter 5). At the same time, the pro-Ottoman stance of the Patriarchate, now most unlikely to find support, gave Korais the opportunity to make his own historical judgement. I have not seen so explicit a denunciation of Byzantium in an earlier text, but we shall see that the climate had been prepared.

The stimulus was the enhanced standing of the ancient Greeks, attested in numerous sources.[34] Let me illustrate it briefly by looking at negative reactions from within the Church.

[32] In *Politika fylladia (1798–1831) tou Ad. Korai* (1983). (Korais's reprint of the pamphlet, despite a few minor errors, is generally faithful: see D. S. Ghinis, 'I epanekdosi tis *Patrikis Didaskalias* apo ton Korai', *O Vivliofilos*, 7 [1953], 12.)

[33] Ibid., 31–2.

[34] See Ladas and Chatzidimos, *Elliniki Vivliografia* and the second volume for 1796–1799 (1973) and Iliou, *Prosthikes*, n.22; also Ch. L. Karaoglou, 'Proepanastatikes mythologies' in *Opseis tis laïkis kai tis logias logotechnias* (Thessaloniki, 1994), 189–210.

In a brief pseudonymous pamphlet printed in 1795, *Motions to the Good, or, A Defence Against Envy and Against the Logic of Evgenios*, Athanasios Psalidas attacked his old teacher Evgenios Voulgaris. The work contains a dedicatory epistle to the ruler of Wallachia, Alexandros Mourouzis, in which we read:

> Hellas that once renowned and envied land; Hellas which revered and worshipped Ares and Apollo, the Muses and Pallas; Hellas the beauteous and lovely, burgeoning with variety of blooms and scents; Hellas likened to an ever-flowering and delightful meadow to which all peoples would resort like bees.

We read, finally, that wretched Greece, after centuries of oppression at the hands of Macedonians and Romans (including the Byzantines), 'has now begun to behold the shining Sun'.[35]

An anonymous reply to this pamphlet appeared within a year or so, probably by Athanasios Parios or someone in his immediate circle, in order to uphold the authority of Evgenios, now a revered archbishop, but also to launch a personal attack on Psalidas and on the pairing, 'Hellas' – 'Western Europe' (Φραγκοευρώπη), even if this had not been mentioned in the earlier pamphlet – at any rate, everyone could see that it was Democracy which was meant by the Sun. Let me give a sample:

> But why and wherefore do you, Psalidas, so deplore [today's] Hellas? ... I shall show you the contrary: that is, that Hellas is blessed and thrice-blessed, and that, to the contrary, your beloved Frankish Europe, however wise she may be today, is no less miserable and thrice-wretched.[36]

There is not space here to follow this line of thought, with its allegations of atheism and materialism, but it is clear that in hardline church circles ancient Hellas is identified not only with Europe but with democracy – this at the height of the French Revolution.

The violence of expression here is in part to be explained by the pamphlet's manuscript form: in printed works Parios and his associates were at first more careful. Accordingly, in the *Christian Apology*, a work of Parios written with the authority of Patriarch Gregory V, and printed in Constantinople in 1798, the lettered are recommended not to read the ancients often, for those who do so 'are later too fastidious to take a book of the Church in hand, and we have indeed seen that this has for many been the cause of a deadly coolness towards religion, and finally of utter destruction, that is, the

[35] Repr. A. Angelou (Trogen, 1951), 7–8; for the case, see Ladas and Chatzidimos, *Elliniki Vivliografia*, 365–7, 387–93.

[36] Text in A. Th. Fotopoulos, '*Elenchos psevdotalanismou tis Ellados*. Orthodoxi apantisi sti dytiki proklisi peri ta teli tou IH' aiona', *Mnimosyni*, 11 (1988–90), 302–64; quotation from pp. 320–22. (There are four MSS, of more or less the same period.)

cause of atheism'.[37] Four years later, however, Parios feels the need to be freer in his expression and thought. In a work circulated under the pseudonym Nathanail Neokaisarefs, *An Outcry Against the Perverse Zeal of the Philosophers who have Come from Europe, Demonstrating that their Deploring of Our Race is Vain and Senseless, and Teaching which is the Real and True Philosophy*, denunciations of ancient Greece extend even to its personages: 'so he was a lecher and a parasite and a pederast, the divine Plato. And what of that famed Socrates, the most moral and most good? ... they described him as a past master of most shameful pederasty.' The list of those denounced is a long one, including Zeno the Stoic, Diogenes and Aristotle, and it ends:

> So those old wise men of the Hellenes were blind to religion and most reprehensible in their actions, even by the witness of our most ancient divine fathers. And then are these perverse zealots not ashamed to deplore our race because they feel the lack of those obscure and filthy philosophers?[38]

Such testimonies are not unique,[39] and by the same token we see that, in other cases, the new enthusiasm for the ancients was boundless: note, for example, the way in which, in 1804, Stephanos Oikonomos, the scion of a priestly family, makes a libation to Poseidon before crossing the Aegean.[40] But it would be a mistake not to recognize the rarity of such cases; let Leake be our witness here:

> Few of the Greeks, who pretend to an enthusiasm for the ancient productions of art or genius, have any correct judgment or feeling of the objects of their admiration ... a general want of mental cultivation and polished society, have in general produced among the Greeks a less classical taste, than is to be found in the most remote regions of Europe, where the works of their ancestors are studied.[41]

Yet we might with reason hold that it is precisely this low level of aesthetic acquaintance with the ancient models that indicates the particular weight of the ancients: for the Greeks, matters of more vital importance than aesthetics were at stake.

Meanwhile Byzantium grows ever more subordinated to the sway of ancient Greece: 'from the time of Constantine the Great till that of Constantine Palaiologos, the Hellenes were shown to be no less Hellenes in their moral

[37] In Dimaras, *Istoria tis neoellinikis logotechnias* (1985), 139. On the *Christian Apology* see D. G. Apostolopoulos, *I Galliki epanastasi stin tourkokratoumeni elliniki koinonia. Antidraseis sta 1798* (1989).

[38] Trieste 1802; quotations (a tiny sample) from pp. 15, 17, 12–13.

[39] Dimaras, 'Deka chronia ellinikis paideias', 255–6.

[40] Letter of 25 July 1804 to his brother Konstantinos Oikonomos, *Allilografia*, I (ed. K. Lappas and R. Stamouli, 1989), 21.

[41] *Researches in Greece* (1814), 235.

character and their learning': that is how Michail Perdikaris comes to the aid of Byzantium in 1817.[42] It will be necessary to research more fully the corpus of histories translated in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, and in particular to assess the additions or changes made by Dimitrios Alexandridis in his supplementary volume to Goldsmith's *History* (1807);[43] also, to guess – if we can do no more – why the translation of the four-volume Byzantine history of R. C. Royou (favourably mentioned by an anonymous Constantinopolitan in 1812) was never published.[44] Probably some men of letters in Constantinople, as in Church circles more generally, maintained a more old-fashioned perspective. Kodrikas, for example, writing from Paris in 1818, enlists even Gibbon (though without citing any particular passage) against Korais's hostility to Byzantium – are we to see this as a sign of desperation?[45] But even in the Epidaurus Constitution we find a striking reference: 'in Criminal and Civil matters, the Laws of the Emperors of Eternal Memory of Constantinople hold' – here perhaps legal formality has played a role.[46] (See, further, Caroula Argyriadis-Kervégan's contribution to the present volume – Chapter 4.) In vain, however, will we hope to find the like of this: the revolutionary wind swept away every other trace of the imperial past.

The crystallizing of a modern national consciousness drew European peoples to the Middle Ages: it is there that they sought their national origins. Medieval values such as faith and order came to be valued more highly, and with the prevailing of the national, the values of the Enlightenment, reason and democracy, went into retreat, and many saw the Middle Ages as the beginnings of the national past. For Greeks, however, the underlying past was – or could be – antiquity. Homer, Militiades, Aristotle, and indeed the age-old conflict between Europe and Asia: such were the best credentials to present to Europe. At the very moment, then, that Greek national consciousness was formed on a new basis, in a will to national independence, it is hardly surprising that a hard core of Hellenism was consciously promoted over Byzantium (and for that matter Macedonia: national purity is prior to continuity).

[42] In *Prodioikisin eis ton Ermilon* (Vienna, 1817), 11–12; also in 1811 in his characteristic pamphlet, 'Rigas i kata psevdofilellinon', conveniently in L. Vranoussis, *Oi prodromoi* (1955), 192–3.

[43] Vienna, 1807; the title of vol. III is the earliest I have met with the term 'Byzantine history' in the modern inclusive sense.

[44] *Ermis o Logios*, 15.3.1812, 81–5.

[45] In A. Daskalakis, *Korais kai Kodrikas* (1966), 349–50.

[46] *Nomos tis Epidavrou itoi prosorinon politevma* ... (Hydra, 1824), 25. More or less the same phrase is to be found in the laws of the Eastern Mainland of Greece, drafted by Theodoros Negris. It is characteristic that Korais is ironic towards the phrase in the Constitution: see *Simeioseis eis to prosorinon politevma tis Ellados* (ed. Th. Volidis, 1933), 118.

It is not, then, the Enlightenment alone which pushed Byzantium out of consideration; nor is it simply that the conduct and mentality of the Middle Ages were not easily fitted to the ideas of Montesquieu, Voltaire, Korais. (Nor that the French philosophers were heirs to a Roman Catholic antipathy for the schismatic Greeks.) Byzantium was rejected by the modern Greeks because it played down their basic national advantage: the possession of glorious ancestors.

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2

Aspects of modern Greek historiography of Byzantium

*George Huxley**

Newly independent countries need to define themselves. Problems of self-definition are linked to perceptions of the past, and those perceptions affect, and are affected by, historical writing. In Greece during the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century questions of self-definition were fraught with difficulty because a sense of continuity with Byzantium and with ancient Greece was part of the process of national definition. The sense of continuity remains vivid to this day, but in the earlier years of the state the difficulties arising from it were persistent and acute.

There was continuity of language, Ottoman Turkish in mainland Greece having made little or no inroad into the syntax of spoken Greek (the inroads were more obvious in Asia Minor); but was the archaizing tongue, or the popular, to be deemed truly representative of Hellenism? There was religious continuity with Byzantium, the Church having possessed defined privileges in the Ottoman centuries; but how was the notion of an Orthodox polity to be reconciled with the glories of a classical, pagan past? There was an ethnic continuity, but with the publication of Fallmerayer's work on the Morea in the Middle Ages, a continuous descent had to be demonstrated rather than simply asserted. Above all, there was insecurity. Newly free Greece was precariously placed at the southern extremity of the Balkan peninsula. The kingdom depended upon the good will of competing European powers, and the Ottomans had not given up their claim to the territory of the new nation. The prevalence of brigandage showed how weak was the rule of the Bavarian. How was such fragility to be reconciled with notions of Hellenism based upon the history of the

* I thank Professors Paschalis M. Kitromilides and Peter Mackridge for helpful conversations.

Athenian empire, or the reconquests of Justinian I, or the imperial successes of Basil the Bulgar-Slayer?

At first, the learned perception of the past was predominantly classical. The predilections of King Otho and his Bavarian court were not the only reason for this tendency. Those who welcomed the consequences of the French Revolution were not eager to applaud the idea of an Orthodox polity, while admirers of Voltaire, Gibbon and the Enlightenment were reluctant to praise what were assumed to be centuries of fossilization or decay in the Lower Empire. Otho and his ministers, imbued with the Glyptothecan spirit of Bavarian classicism, were determined to restore Greece to a condition worthy of ancient precedent. Archaeological places were surveyed after Ludwig Ross had been appointed Director of Antiquities, and the culminating task in the transformation of Athens was to have been the building of the Royal Palace upon the Acropolis, to the designs produced by Karl Friedrich von Schinkel in 1834. At the same time, Byzantine buildings were being destroyed when they stood in places graced by ruins of antiquity. Political opposition to the conduct and aims of the Bavarian court and its adherents resulted in the deportation of Otho in 1862. But the opposition was also historically based. Those Greeks for whom Constantinople was 'The City' – that is to say, all Greeks both within and without the new kingdom – had limited sympathy for an exclusively classicizing programme. Not only was Byzantium the essential link between the present and the ancient past of the Hellenes, but also a Byzantine paradigm was needed by those ambitious persons who desired to redeem Greeks still subject to Ottoman rule. The paradigm became all the more attractive after the Hellenized Vlach politician Kolettis argued in 1844 for gains in territory: Greeks, he insisted, did not live only in the kingdom of Greece.[1] There were Greeks in Ioannina, in Salonica, in Serres, in Adrianople, in Constantinople, in Smyrna, in Trebizond, in Crete, in Samos, and in any land associated with Greek history and the Greek *ethnos*. The City, Constantinople, was the dream and hope of all the Greeks. The question as to whether Greeks had a historical claim upon places in which they were in a minority was not addressed, so, with early Greek colonization and with Alexander the Great in mind, it would have been possible to argue that there was a Hellenic claim to territories extending from the Iberian peninsula to Sogdiana and from the Crimea to Meroe.

Two figures are prominent in the intellectual drive to associate irredentism with the notion of historical continuity. Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos is discussed by Paschalis M. Kitromilides elsewhere in this volume (Chapter 3), but he cannot be ignored here because his *History* not only was a great work of synthesis but also defined the terms in which later Greek historians conducted their investigations. For Paparrigopoulos, as for his successors, present politics and past events are interlocked. Of the greatest interest, also, is his discussion of the iconoclast emperors of Byzantium. Their reforming activity, he believed, set a precedent for ecclesiastical reform in Western Europe at the Reformation; and Gibbon's charges against Byzantium were, accordingly, ill founded: Byzantium lacked neither enterprise nor the capacity for self-renovation. Here we may also detect the influence of Protestant historiography and of the Whig Interpretation of history, and it is not by chance that Paparrigopoulos is warm in his praise of Macaulay, who is declared to be the most distinguished of Protestant historians owing to his account of papal power and the origins of the Reformation.

[1] Concerning the irredentism of Kolettis see Artemis Leontis, *Topographies of Hellenism. Mapping the Homeland* (Ithaca, NY, 1995), 74–6. Professor E. R. Gebhard kindly gave a copy of the book to me.

The second dominant historian in the early years of the new kingdom was the Corfiot, Spyridon Zambelios, a scholar of indefatigable industry and passionate expressiveness – the historical introduction to his *Asmata Dimotika* published in Corfu in 1852 runs to some 595 pages. There Zambelios argues that it is ecclesiastical, not imperial, history that is definitive of Hellenism. It is a new Hellenism in which three elements combine – ethnology, within which he is prepared to contemplate the inclusion of an Orthodox Slavonic contribution; *politeuma*, that is to say democracy; and finally religion, wherein the Trinity enables the Cross to rule over alien cults. Perhaps, Zambelios opined, as the light spreads over the East from the Heptalophos of the City a new Alexander will convey the symbols of Orthodoxy to the Indus and the Ganges. The true combination of the three elements constitutes what Zambelios calls *historionomia*, a term entailing the comprehension of the political present in terms of the inherited, and specifically Orthodox, past. Continuity is not only religious, it is also poetic. Kleftic poetry is both ethnic and demotic, and its metre is the only fit line for the modern Muse. It was Greek nature herself who in the remote Agrafa taught the klefts their poetical skill; and it is the kleft who is the anonymous poet of the Hellenic renaissance, because he is suited to the aesthetic and historionomic canons of the *genos*. This is heady stuff but it was right to look to the folk songs of *armatoloi* and klefts for additional evidence of historical continuity during the Ottoman domination of Greece. The texts are presented without a critical apparatus, but they serve to illustrate the theme of kleftic independence and resistance: one of the songs in the collection puts the matter bluntly: 'I want only klefts for sword and gun to make widows and orphans in the houses of the Turks, there to sell them off and there to burn their villages.'[2] In a later work, 'Whence the Common Word *Tragoudo*?', published

[2] P. 602, no. 5.

in Athens in 1859, Zambelios returned to the ties between religion and inherited demotic song in his discussion of the women's laments. Death, not love, according to Zambelios, is the principal theme of Greek popular poetry and it is the priests who have been the true preservers of Greek and so of Greekness, even in the Heptanese.

For the theme of this volume, however, the most significant work of Zambelios is his *Byzantine Studies* (*Vyzantinai Meletai*), published in Athens in 1857. The subtitle is 'On the Sources of modern Greek Nationality from the eighth to the tenth century after Christ'. In this work the author's liking for schematism is much in evidence. The emperor, we are told, defended the polity, the Synod defended faith, and the school learning. They continued in the defence for eleven centuries, and after 1453 the notion of Hellenism was kept alive by the *hierodidaskaloi*, whose activities may be compared with the deeds of the *pallikaria*; both ensured that tradition is Greek, national and historical. The learned were always aware of continuity, but religion enables the populace also to become conscious of it. Thus, Hellenism and Christianity revealed anew their ancient friendship (a friendship already ensured by the Greek-speaking Fathers of the Church).

The proper bounds of the Neohellenic Fatherland, says Zambelios, are those defined by Nikephoros Phokas and Tzimiskes. This is the demarcation of the boundaries of Greco-Romaic unity. Nationhood can be compared with the Trinity, since it is historical, spiritual and political; and Byzantium too was triadic, having been Hellenic in speech and learning, Christian in doctrine, and Roman in the imperial system of government. Language is uppermost, Christianity in the middle, and Roman-ness at the bottom, because the empire was ceaselessly Hellenized. Gibbon's history is superficial because it is political history of court and emperors; the truth is that the anonymous *plethos* acts as chorus in the historical drama, and so the 'I believe' of the Byzantines' *homodogmatia* was enabled to check the deadly plans of the Huns, Russians, Bulgars, Persians, Saracens, Crusaders and Latin bishops. In a paean to doctrine, Zambelios declares that the Creed compelled Muhammad to grant subject peoples certain privileges; the Creed defended Hellenes against Turkish proselytism and against encroachment by Europeans. Neohellenic nationality springs from the Incarnation. Having flowed through Byzantine history, nationality has welled up again in the Greek resurrection and flows onward in the divinely hewn course ordained for it. We must admire Zambelios's sense of historical destiny, even if, with 1922 and other disasters in mind, we are also alarmed by it. There is no doubt that he found a widespread response among Hellenes, and his great merit, which he shares with Paparrigopoulos, is his insistence upon the central place of Byzantium in Greco-Romaic continuity.

In searching for linguistic continuity from Byzantine times Zambelios went to the archives in Naples and at Grottaferrata. His linguistic studies

resulted in the publication of *Italohellenika* (Athens, 1868), a work dedicated to Alexandros Rizos Rangavis – aptly, since the latter's surname was of Byzantine origin. From the Greek speech of Apulia and Calabria and from documents of the Byzantine administration of southern Italy, Zambelios inferred that Italian Greek reflects neither ancient Doric nor Justinianic influence. Italian Greek, he argued, descended from the speech of fugitives from iconoclasm, and in twelfth-century documents there was language indistinguishable from modern Greek. (On such issues, as discussed later in the nineteenth century by students of language, see Peter Mackridge's contribution to the present volume, Chapter 5.) From a modern philological viewpoint Zambelios perhaps underestimates the residue of ancient Greek in southern Italy, but the book is none the less significant because it draws attention, in a pioneering manner, to the value of linguistic, or, as Zambelios would have said, glottological, evidence for historians of the Byzantine empire. Here, as in other writings of Zambelios, the prose has the urgency of a political diatribe; there is, indeed, much of the visionary politician in him, and it is fitting that he was for some time a deputy for Lefkas in the Greek parliament. It is worthy of note, also, that Zambelios in his treatment of Byzantine and modern Greek has broken quite free of earlier notions linking the latter to ancient Greek dialects: the Aeolo-Doric hypothesis was conclusively refuted by the lexicographer E. A. Sophocles in his *Romaic Grammar* (1842) and other works published in the United States. Sophocles demonstrated that the historical development of modern Greek was to be traced through Byzantium to the Hellenistic *koine*.[3]

This is a short paper on aspects of a big subject. I have to select, but it will be understood that to include a few names from among many is not to show partiality, and to exclude is not to despise. The next scholar requiring attention is Pavlos Karolidis. He was born in 1849 at Andronikeion in Cappadocia and educated at the Great School of the *Genos* in Constantinople and at the Evangelical School in Smyrna.[4] In 1867 he went to the University in Athens and later to studies in Munich, Tübingen and Strasbourg. After working as a schoolmaster in Chalkidon, at Pera, and in Smyrna, he returned to academic life in Athens in 1893. He served in the Turkish parliament as a member for Aydin from 1908 to 1912. As a Cappadocian he knew Turkish well, so well indeed that he translated Kritoboulos into Turkish at the request of Mehmet V and the Constantinopolitan Academy. This versatile scholar also wrote a history of Byzantium in Turkish. He studied the ancient history of Cappadocia with

[3] See G. Soulis, *Athina*, 56 (1952), 125–41, esp. 138 (reprinted in his *Istorika Meletemata* [1980], 261–77).

[4] For a brief biography see the article by A. Adamantios in *Megali Elliniki Enkyklopaideia*, XIII, 873.

particular attention to Strabo's account of the country and he also edited a new edition of the *History* of Paparrigopoulos and wrote a continuation of it. Among his other writings was a work published in 1908 in which he argued that the Orthodox populations of Syria and Palestine were of Hellenic descent; the intention was to refute Russian claims that these Christian peoples were Aramaic in origin. Many of the changes to the text of Paparrigopoulos are such as a Greek of Asia Minor with orientalist interests would be expected to make. Karolidis repeatedly denies that inhabitants of the Armeniak theme were Armenians; he improves the account of Persian Zoroastrianism and Shiite Islam; he refers to Saïd Battal in connection with Byzantine campaigns on the eastern frontier.

Characteristic of Karolidis's qualities as a historian – of his clear prose, critical intellect and generosity of spirit – is his essay on the Emperor Romanos Diogenes published in the series put out by the Society for the Distribution of Helpful Books (Athens, 1906). Karolidis emphasizes the noble and chivalrous character of the Sultan Alp Arslan, who, it is argued, sued for peace after the defeat of Basilakios near Lake Van and the desertion of the Ouzoi, not out of deceit, but because the Greek force was larger and because he needed to direct his attention to Turkestan. 'But Diogenes, after all the aforementioned failures, was overwhelmed by an irrepressible urge for action. He, too, was a most brave and heroic warrior and commander.' In the opinion of Karolidis, Romanos Diogenes was, after Herakleios, the bravest and most heroic of the emperors of the *Hellenorhomaioi* but he became a captive like Valerian. The nobility of Alp Arslan's treatment of the royal prisoner is contrasted with the treachery of Andronikos Doukas. Romanos was, says Karolides, the last upholder of Hellenism on the eastern frontiers of the empire. He was the last emperor to give spirit and power to the ill-disciplined crowd of warriors then called the Roman or Hellenic army. Immediately after his piteous end on the isle of Proti came the collapse of the power of Hellenism in Asia. Within eight years most of Asia Minor had fallen to Malek-Shāh, the son of Alp Arslan. Through the loss of Asia Minor the entire Hellenic state was dealt a decisive and deadly blow because Asia Minor constituted the most vital element of the state and was in fact the Greater Hellas of medieval Hellenism. Karolidis was imbued with national feeling, but like many Anatolian Greeks he tempered ethnic pride with a capacity for political compromise such as is shown in his ability to serve the interests of the Ottoman state. The detachment informs his historical judgements. As a Cappadocian he knew how vulnerable the Hellenic communities of Asia Minor were. The fate of the Armenians in 1894 was already a grave warning of the potential for trouble from unrestrained nationalism in the years ahead.

Cappadocian themes were also of concern to a skilled philologist, Socrates B. Kougeas, the author of *Arethas of Caesarea and his Work*, published in

Athens in 1913.[5] Kougeas, a pupil of the industrious politician, palaeographer, and publisher of archives, Spyridon Lambros, had been born in Laconia in 1877. From 1926 he directed the Department of Manuscripts in the National Library at Athens. During the winter of 1908 he worked in the Royal Library at Berlin where he came to admire, and to emulate, the high standards of German philological scholarship. At the beginning of the book on Arethas he notes Wilamowitz's remark that whoever researches into the classical scholarship of the Byzantines will find a rewarding theme. B. Keil's comparison of ninth- and tenth-century Greek erudition with that of the third century BC is also quoted with approval. Arethas is brought to life from his marginal annotations. Kougeas shows Arethas explaining place names, providing explanations in incomplete contexts, adding to earlier scholia, and recording matters of interest to students of folklore. We see him employing calligraphers, including one with an Armenian name, Baanes. The use of papyri in the Metropolitan's bibliographical workshop is discussed; Kougeas makes important inferences concerning the continuing production of papyrus in Arab Egypt and its export into Byzantine territory, a business from which Byzantine scholars benefited at least until the mid-tenth century. Photios also is shown to have possessed works written on papyrus. Arethas himself collected books in Syria when acting as ambassador of Romanos Lakapenos. Egypt, says Kougeas, fertilized the Byzantine garden. The book is an admirable instance of disciplined and well-digested scholarship. The *Arethas* is rare now; it should be reprinted.

Greek Byzantinists have excelled in the publication and editing of documents. The practice began early and continues at a high standard to this day. The names of Rallis and Potlis, with their work on ecclesiastical canons, come to mind – six volumes were published in Athens between 1852 and 1859; or the *Ius Graeco-Romanum* of the Zepoi; or Sathas and the seven volumes of his *Medieval Library*; or the extensive editorial activity of Spyridon Lambros, including the vitally important *Short Chronicles* edited for publication by K. I. Amantos in 1932. Here we learn of the paschal chant heard in Hagia Sophia in 1559; when the janissaries, or in a second version the dervishes, investigated, the singing ceased but the sultan knew that his days were numbered. Here, too, is the oracle declaring that the fifth sultan would be the last and the power of the Hagarenes would be overthrown. Hope indeed gave a powerful impulse to notions of Byzantine continuity. But among the editors of texts one deserves special mention because he reminds us of the support that Orthodox Russia gave to Byzantine studies, as much for reasons of diplomacy as of scholarship.[6] Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus was the son of a Thessalian priest, who moved to Asia Minor.

[5] *Kaisareias Arethas Kai to ergon autou* (1913).

[6] See Th. C. Prousis, *Russian Society and the Greek Revolution* (De Kalb, 1994), 165–9.

The boy did not go to university, but he had a passion for ecclesiastical knowledge. At the Evangelical School in Smyrna he worked as Librarian and Custodian of the Museum; he published a catalogue of the manuscripts at the School in 1877. Later, he attracted international notice at an archaeological congress held at Odessa in 1884. Having become Secretary to Nikodimos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, he catalogued manuscripts of the Orthodox Greek East and published them with the aid of the Russian Orthodox Society of Palestine. From 1892 he taught at the University of St Petersburg; a post in the public library there was found for him in 1904. He died in 1912 at the age of 57, working hard at texts almost to the end and leaving much unpublished matter – it is significant that five of his volumes are called a *Stachyologia*, that is 'gleanings'.[7] Here abound items to inform the most recherché erudition: examples are a life of the Persian martyr Golindouch; the martyrdom of Athanasius of Klysma (Suez); fragments of Irenaeus of Lugdunum.

In *Varia Graeca Sacra* (St Petersburg 1909),[8] there is an Orthodox version of an age-old ceremony, the Taxis and Akolouthia performed at the rising of the Nile. The work of Papadopoulos-Kerameus reminds us of the persistence of Greek Orthodoxy in Arab lands; and the official tsarist support of his career hints to us that in matters of Greek ecclesiastical politics Russia still had a Greek project, more than a century after Catherine the Great had hoped to place her son Constantine upon the throne of a revived Greek empire in the City. Let us recall, too, that after the Greeks' military failure in Thessaly and Epirus in 1897, a ceasefire was imposed as a result of Russian diplomatic initiatives. The Russians, too, had their Great Idea until 1917 and even beyond. But, alas, in 1922 there was no Tsar to intervene.

Except for some hardened romantics, the disasters in Asia Minor of 1922 put a stop to the Greeks' Great Idea. After the defeat a period of introspection, matching the loss of national confidence, can be detected in Byzantine studies in Greece. Thus K. I. Amantos in his *Prolegomena to the History of the Byzantine Empire*, writing in 1932, tried to find the explanation of failure in emigration. The most vital elements of the Greek population went abroad, the biologically weaker elements stayed behind.[9] In one generation hundreds of thousands had gone to America and elsewhere. But had the ancient Greeks (and so by implication the Byzantines) held on to the Balkans and Asia Minor, they would have become the strongest nation upon earth today and their influence would have been immeasurable. Yet despite devastating disappointments the faith in Hellenism, a Hellenism confined to the national territory and to elements in the diaspora, persisted. Faithful still to

[7] *Analekta Ierosolymitikis Stachyologias*, 1–5 (St Petersburg, 1891–98).
[8] Repr. Leipzig, 1975.
[9] There is also an English translation by Kenneth Johnstone (Amsterdam, 1969).

the precepts of Zambelios, D. A. Zakythinos, who praised the insight of the Corfiot in a remarkable essay in *Metabyzantina kai Nea Hellenika*, shared also the vision of Plethon[10] (on whom see also Robert Shannan Peckham's contribution to the present volume, Chapter 8). In *Le Despotat grec de Morée* Zakythinos wrote in 1953, not long after the end of a bitter civil war:

> The great problems of the present preoccupied the mind of Plethon. The agony of a world that moved ineluctably towards its ruin, the arrival of an Asiatic tribe threatening to wreck an entire system of thought and of rules of life, strike the thinker. At the foot of Taygetos he has the vision of a new world, renewed by the values of a national culture and so enabled to withstand the attack of the East.[11]

Resistance to what is deemed alien remains a central theme of the Greek historiography of Hellenism: without continuous resistance the notion of continuity is put at risk.

Poetry, said Aristotle, is a more philosophical and a weightier undertaking than history. Perhaps therefore one should end with a poem having a historical context: a poem may give us deeper insight into resistance and continuity than the sharpest of historical techniques. In the poem 'Neophytos the Enkleistos speaks', Seferis has Neophytos, despite the *kaïmos* of Romiosyne, and the sale of Cyprus to the knights, and the might of the Lusignans, at last declaring 'Welcome to Cyprus, masters! Goats and monkeys.'[12] The strangers are, inevitably, accepted, but yet, in desolation, Greco-Romaic Christendom endures.

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[10] 1978, 529–53.
[11] 2 (1953), 372.
[12] *Poiimata* (1964), 263–4.

3

On the intellectual content of Greek nationalism: Paparrigopoulos, Byzantium and the Great Idea

*Paschalis M. Kitromilides**

A conventional view in the historiography of modern Greece tends to connect the origins of Greek nationalism, what is usually described as the Great Idea, with attitudes and aspirations dating from the late Byzantine period, specifically from the period of decline after 1204, which witnessed the rise of millenarian hopes for the recovery of Constantinople by the Orthodox heirs of the Eastern Roman Empire. This view, which has been propounded by Byzantinists, including such distinguished authorities as D. A. Zakythinos, A. A. M. Bryer and Hélène Ahrweiler,[1] appears to suggest that the expressions of Greek nationalism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries may be placed in the same historical continuum as the intellectual and psychological reactions to the destruction of Byzantine power in Asia Minor after the battle of Manzikert in 1071,[2] the capture of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204, the fall of the empire in 1453 and of Trebizond in 1461. The same historical continuum also comprises the expressions of the hope for redemption of the Christian people from infidel captivity during the centuries of Ottoman rule. This latter view, which connects the origins of

* I am grateful to George L. Huxley and Peter Mackridge, Ioanna Petropoulou and Thanos Veremis for reading and commenting on earlier drafts of this paper. For their comments at the original presentation of the paper, which helped me to clarify certain points in the text, I am indebted to Judith Herrin and Costa Carras.

[1] D. A. Zakythinos, *Metavyzantina kai Nea Ellinika* (1978), 447–63 and *The Making of Modern Greece from Byzantium to Independence* (Oxford, 1976), 192–8; A. A. M. Bryer, 'The Great Idea', *History Today*, 15 (3) (March 1965), 513–47; H. Ahrweiler, *L'idéologie politique de l'empire byzantin* (Paris, 1975), 107–14. See also I. K. Voyatzidis, 'La Grande Idée', *1453–1953. Le cinq-centième anniversaire de la prise de Constantinople* (29 May 1953), 279–87.

[2] Cf. S. J. Vryonis, Jr, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century* (Berkeley, 1971), 408–38.

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the Great Idea with the popular traditions of the *Tourkokratia*, appears in the work of scholars of Greek folklore and popular culture.[3]

An extensive and influential literature on Greek history and culture is premised on such views, contributing to a general inability to appreciate the specificity of phenomena connected with distinctly modern historical experiences such as the construction of a modern state in nineteenth-century Greece. In this paper I should like to place a few question marks against the validity of the conventional approach to the Great Idea. I wish to suggest that what I have briefly sketched as the conventional view essentially abolishes the specificity of Greek nationalism as a distinct political and intellectual phenomenon connected with the formation, consolidation and legitimation of the Greek state. In this connection I should like to point out that we need to look at the Great Idea as an ideological expression of the Greek state and to interpret it in the light of social and cultural preconditions having to do with the cultivation of identity in the process of nation-building in nineteenth-century Greece.

After these methodological preliminaries it might be useful to turn to a reconsideration of the sources themselves. Customarily the Great Idea as a term and as a framework of ideological discourse is connected with the famous address by Ioannis Kolettis in the Greek National Assembly on 14 January 1844. This is correct. Nevertheless, while the coinage of the term 'Great Idea' is inextricably connected with Kolettis's speech, a few months earlier an almost identical phrase had been used by the poet Alexander Soutsos in a work published in 1843.[4] Let me quote the relevant passage:

> Κι ἂν εἰς τὸ Γένος ἤρχετο ἰδέα τις μεγάλη
> τὰ νεκρωμένα μέλη του εἰς κίνησιν νὰ βάλῃ
> κ' ἐζήτει τὴν προγονικὴν αὐτοῦ κληρονομίαν
> τῶν Κομνηνῶν προπάππων του τὴν Αὐτοκρατορίαν
> τίς τολμητίας ἔμελλεν ἀντίστασιν νὰ δείξῃ,
> τὴν πάνδημον ἐντὸς κι ἐκτὸς φωνὴν αὐτὴν νὰ πνίξῃ;
>
> And if there were to come to the Race some great idea
> of setting its lifeless limbs in motion
> and if it sought its ancestral heritage,
> the empire of its Comnene great-grandfathers,
> what rash spirit would show resistance to this
> and smother this voice of all the people within and without
> [Greece's borders]?

[3] Most notably N. G. Politis, *Meletai peri tou viou kai tis glossis tou ellinikou laou* (1904), 19–27 and commentary in Part II, A, 651–91. See also G. Megas, 'La prise de Constantinople dans la poésie et la tradition populaire', *Le cinq-centième anniversaire*, 125–33.

[4] In the 'political drama', *O Prothypourgos kai o atithasos poiitis* (Brussels, 1843), 9–10. See Y. Lefas, *O Alexandros Soutsos kai oi epidraseis tou ergou tou stous synchronous tou* (1979), 27, n.2.

The poet talks of a great idea that might come to the nation, an idea which would involve reclaiming its ancestral inheritance, whose specific form is described as the Comnenian Empire. It thus appears that in this early appearance of the phrase the 'great idea' is interpreted as a claim on the Byzantine Empire. Soutsos, however, connects the term 'great idea' with an indefinite pronoun and thus leaves the meaning much more fluid and rather close to usage in everyday speech. In Kolettis's text things are different. Kolettis is concerned with the unity of the Greek nation, both inside and outside the Greek kingdom.[5] By means of the argument for unity he wanted to combat the positions taken by all those who denied 'heterochthons' like himself a role in Greek politics. The 'great idea', which he connected with this broader sense of Greek nationality, denoted in fact a political programme that involved Greece's cultural and political hegemony in the 'Greek East', not a resurrected Byzantium. In fact, in this famous address, which is rightly considered as marking the birth of the Great Idea, Kolettis remains silent on Byzantium. At that quite early date Byzantium was still, apparently, a rhetorical device of little effectiveness, and as a form of symbolic discourse it had not yet acquired the evocativeness and psychological potency it was later to have in Greek social communication. Kolettis, moreover, was active at a time when the Enlightenment tradition was still present in Greek politics and strong condemnations of Byzantium were still being voiced in Greek intellectual life. His Western education and radical political origins kept him within the orbit of the Enlightenment.[6] This might explain his silence on Byzantium and the different, mainly cultural, content he ascribed to the Great Idea.

The projection of Byzantium as an integral component of Greek history and of Greek identity was the product of the intellectual labours of one of Kolettis's younger associates, Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos.[7] In some of his early writings in the mid-1840s Paparrigopoulos echoed the negative attitude toward Byzantium that prevailed among latter-day followers of the Enlightenment.[8] This predisposition, however, was completely reversed in his later work, which over a period of three decades produced the monumental synthesis of the *History of the Greek Nation*.[9] In this work, which could

[5] This famous text is to be found in *I tis Tritis Septemvriou en Athinais Ethniki Synelefsis* (1844), 190–94. Cf. the commentary in K. Th. Dimaras, *Ellinikos romantismos* (1982), 405–18.

[6] Kolettis's connections with pre-revolutionary radicalism were reflected in the suggestion, long made in Greek literary history, that he had been the author of the most radical republican tract of the Greek Enlightenment, *Hellenic Nomarchy*, published anonymously in 1806.

[7] As a young publicist Paparrigopoulos worked for three months in 1847 on one of Kolettis's newspapers, *Ethniki*. See K. Th. Dimaras, *Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos* (1986), 125.

[8] Dimaras, *Paparrigopoulos*, 123–4.

[9] K. Paparrigopoulos, *Istoria tou ellinikou ethnous* (5 vols, 1860–74; second definitive edition, 5 vols, 1885–87). References below are to the second edition.

be characterized without serious risk of exaggeration as the most important intellectual achievement of nineteenth-century Greece, Paparrigopoulos managed to bring Byzantium and Kolettis's conception of the Great Idea together as components of the political culture of 'Romantic Hellenism'.[10] In Paparrigopoulos's work, the anxiety brought by the Enlightenment into Greek thought in relation to the Byzantine dimensions of Greek history and Greek identity was finally settled in the most magnificent and reassuring way.[11] His account of Byzantium, nevertheless, is not a mere rhetorical eulogy. He provides the reader with an extensive and substantive acquaintance with Byzantine history, which for him is the history of the Greek people – or rather of the collective historical agent, the Greek nation – during the medieval millennium. What Paparrigopoulos had written rather programmatically in 1852 is now set out in the fullest and most imposing way: 'to the Byzantine state we owe the conservation of our language, our religion and more generally of our nationality'.[12]

Paparrigopoulos's account is detailed and critical, informed by his sense of political responsibility, which he feels ought to be the primary criterion for the judgement of political leadership, whether exercised by Byzantine emperors or by contemporary Greek politicians. The narrative of Byzantine history forms the backbone of Paparrigopoulos's work and constitutes its most detailed and extensive part, taking up more or less three of the five volumes of the second and definitive edition of 1885–87, the last produced in the author's lifetime. It would be tempting, if space permitted, to enliven this account with details from Paparrigopoulos's treatment of particular subjects of Byzantine history, such as the incorporation of Greek pagan literature into the Christian culture of the Empire;[13] the incidence of heresy in the Church and the role of the state in the crystallization of official Orthodox doctrine in the ecumenical councils;[14] and Iconoclasm, which for him was a gigantic reform project that constituted the central drama of Byzantine history and whose failure, the reader occasionally senses, was perhaps connected with the eventual decline and fall of the empire.[15]

[10] On the meaning of the term cf. C. Mango, 'Byzantinism and romantic Hellenism', *Byzantium and its Image* (1984), Study I, 40–42.

[11] On this see P. M. Kitromilides, 'Tradition, Enlightenment and Revolution: Ideological change in eighteenth and nineteenth century Greece' (doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1978), 94–8. (See now also the Greek translation: *Neoellinikos Diafotismos: oi politikes kai koinonikes idees*, tr. S. Nikoloudi [1996], 104–9.)

[12] Dimaras, *Paparrigopoulos*, 171.

[13] Paparrigopoulos, *Istoria*, II (1886), 590–603, 614–17, 653–9, 675–6, and III (1886), 12–17, 170–77.

[14] Ibid., II, 512–16, 608–10, and III, 703–9.

[15] Ibid., III, 360–699. Note especially the author's overall judgement on pp. 698–9, which connects the policies of the iconoclastic emperors with the distant origins of the Reformation.

What is perhaps surprising to a modern reader of Paparrigopoulos, especially one who, without having read the work, tends to think of it as merely an ideological and essentially rhetorical statement of Greek nationalism, is the attention the author devotes to social, economic and cultural issues in the life of the Byzantine empire and to technical questions in monetary, administrative and religious history. The broad outline of the *History* is nevertheless set by the narrative of political and military events and struggles, and this endows the work with an epic character which captivates the reader as a story of greatness, high drama and tragedy. In narrating the chronicle of the Byzantine millennium the author's interest remains focused upon ethnological issues, because his deeper concern is to depict the survival and continuous existence of that exceptional historical actor, the Greek nation, '*to ellinikon ethnos*', whose presence on the scene of world history he projects from the very first sentence of his five volumes. His concern with the diachronic presence and continuity of the Greek nation, whose trajectories he traces through the millennia, leads Paparrigopoulos to an understanding of the collective protagonist of his work as an immutable and timeless social organism. Thus, though he draws extensively on contemporary European historiography and is well aware of the attempts of German scholarship to interpret ancient Greek mythology and legend, he remains generally indifferent to the theories of ethnogenesis elaborated by comparative philology and ethnology, which dominated the human sciences in Romantic Europe.[16] Although he posits the continuous existence of the Greek nation since the dawn of history, Paparrigopoulos conveys nevertheless in his narrative a sense of cultural evolution through five successive stages, which comprise ancient, Macedonian, Christian, medieval, and modern Hellenism. Thus the panorama of Greek history is set on a grand scale.

One stylistic aspect of the text is critical to our understanding of the work. Paparrigopoulos talks of Byzantium in entirely familiar terms, not as something distant in chronological and cultural time, but on the contrary as a historical entity which has an intimacy with the society of his own time. The Byzantine past, for him and his audience, is by no means a 'foreign country'. Thus he talks of 'Medieval Hellenism', of the 'Medieval Greek monarchy', of 'our Medieval empire', of 'our emperors', of 'our Medieval forefathers'. This nurtures a sense of intimacy in the reader's mind and contributes to the incorporation of the Byzantine past into the frame of reference of his or her identity. Thus the reader learns to share the author's enthusiasm for Byzantium's achievements and grandeur and follows him in his grief and despair over the empire's decline and destruction. The drama of 1453 becomes a

[16] Ibid., I (1885), 53–63, 68–75, 860–76. On the pertinent intellectual climate in Romantic Europe cf. M. Thom, *Republics, Nations and Tribes* (1995), 212–68.

source of mourning and dejection and the fall of Constantinople is felt as a personal loss, an open wound, an inconsolable sorrow.[17] Paparrigopoulos's work, however, is not merely a romantic elegy, a lament for Byzantium. It is primarily a Greek epic. Through the feeling of loss the reader is also taught to appreciate the great empire's most admirable achievement: the unification of the Greek nation, the healing of classical Hellenism's bitter disunity, the realization in the bosom of the Christian Empire of that most noble and most elusive of social ideals, national unity, solidarity and cohesion. That greatest of Byzantium's accomplishments Paparrigopoulos extolled as his own greatest lesson to his contemporaries.

In his project to incorporate the Middle Ages into a linear national history Paparrigopoulos was extending the broader historiographical tendency inspired by the sensibility of European Romanticism into Greek cultural life. His work was a pioneering project whose influence was felt beyond the limits of Greek culture. It supplied a model for the historiographical traditions of other Balkan nationalities which followed Greece in the projects of state- and nation-building in the nineteenth century. The recovery and repossession of their nations' medieval past became the primary objectives in the research and writing programmes of Nicolae Iorga and Vasil Zlatarski, who in the early part of the twentieth century attempted to do for the Romanians and the Bulgarians respectively what Paparrigopoulos had done for the Greeks a few decades earlier.

The affinities between the two Balkan national historians and Paparrigopoulos are striking. Thus Iorga produced a ten-volume *History of the Rumanians*, in which his inspiration from Paparrigopoulos's conception of the successive stages of one unitary line of national evolution through the millennia is clear. Zlatarski's extensive researches on medieval Bulgaria and his attempt to recreate a coherent picture of the medieval past of his people closely parallels Paparrigopoulos's focus on Byzantium and his preoccupation with the ethnological underpinnings of the medieval Greek state.

Paparrigopoulos's work provoked considerable criticism in intellectual and academic circles,[18] but it had an immediate broader social appeal rare in an academic work. The Greek state authorities and the spokesmen of a broad spectrum of public opinion acclaimed the work, supported its successive reprints and new editions and promoted its distribution effectively. The pertinent evidence assembled by Dimaras's monograph provides eloquent testimony to the fact that the *History of the Greek Nation* responded to profound needs and cravings in Greek society and collective consciousness.[19] It

[17] Ibid., V (1887), 336–434, esp. 423–34. Cf. also pp. 435–42: 'The historical significance of the Fall of Constantinople'.

[18] Dimaras, *Paparrigopoulos*, 294–8, 318–22.

[19] Ibid., 227–31.

provided, I think, a comforting matrix for the self-understanding of Greek identity and supplied psychological and moral reassurance for a society whose national aspirations far exceeded not only its capabilities but also – and more seriously – the moral calibre of its political life, as Paparrigopoulos himself never tired of pointing out.[20]

Paparrigopoulos's rehabilitation of Byzantium, however, and the admirable way in which he integrated it into the continuum of Greek historical development, had a determining influence on Greek political thought. Without ever putting it in writing in the pages of his *History*, he was instrumental in establishing the image of the Byzantine Empire under the Macedonian and Comnenian dynasties, into a form of teleology for the Greek state: in other words, into an ideal territorial and geographical model which was felt in Greek political culture to be a pointer to the future destiny and mission of Greece.

Paparrigopoulos's historical theory provided an outlet for the articulation of feelings and predispositions which were widespread but inchoate in collective mentality since the liberation of Greece. The substratum of Orthodox culture supplied a living connection with the Byzantine past at the level of popular psychology, but this remained outside the purview of formal cultural expression until about the time of Papadiamantis at the end of the nineteenth century. The reconquest of Constantinople,[21] the recreation of a 'Greek Empire',[22] the dream of a larger Greek state in the Balkans,[23] were often voiced in Greek public debate, especially under the pressure of international crises such as the Crimean War or the confrontation with Bulgarian nationalism after 1870. But it required a major intellectual achievement such as the *History of the Greek Nation* before Byzantium could be canonized in Greek political thought as the *telos* to which the Greek state and Greek destinies were expected to strive to approximate. Within the framework of Paparrigopoulos's historical theory inherited forms of cultural expression, such as those associated with the Orthodox liturgical cycle and the images of emperors, the commemoration of Christian kings, the evocation of the Orthodox kingdom and its earthly seat, Constantinople, which is so powerfully communicated in texts such as the Akathist Hymn, sung every year during Lent and forming such an intimate component of Orthodox worship, acquired new, specifically political meaning.[24]

The new outlook can be felt in the remarks on the Great Idea put forward in a rather unlikely source, a book of recollections from a trip to Sweden and

[20] See e.g. Paparrigopoulos, *Istoria*, V, 736–9, 744–9, 861–5.

[21] E.g. A. Goudas, 'Peri tis Megalis Ideas', *Melissa*, 2nd series, 1 (1864), 96.

[22] Cf. A. Soutsos, *Apomnimonevmata poiitika epi tou Anatolikou Polemou* (1857), 11–42.

[23] For a useful survey see E. Skopetea, *To protypo vasileio kai i Megali Idea* (1988), 273–307.

[24] Cf. Paparrigopoulos's comments on the Akathist and its political significance in *Istoria*, V, 241–4.

Norway by Pavlos Karolidis, Paparrigopoulos's successor in the Chair of the History of the Greek Nation in the University of Athens (on whom see also George Huxley's contribution to the present volume, Chapter 2). Gazing on the grey waves of the North Sea from the seafront at Christiania (now Oslo), and ruminating on Greek nationalism on the shores of a warmer sea on the other side of the European continent, Karolidis dismisses the disdain of foreign critics who viewed the claims of the Great Idea as mere Greek chauvinism. He goes on to attack the arguments of 'a few modernist philosophers of history' among the Greeks, who considered these aspirations to be contrary to the practical needs and prosperity of the nation, and that the claims of Greek nationalism should be limited to the geographical heartlands of classical Hellenism. The Great Idea, in its broader geographical definition, was, according to Karolidis, not 'an expression of pious hopes and of dreams of national grandeur' but 'a historical necessity, an issue of national existence and self-sufficiency'. In this vision of the Great Idea 'the view of the magnificent ruins of the Parthenon could never obscure in Greek national consciousness the historical power of Hagia Sophia'. Abandonment of this vision would amount, in this historian's judgement, to the loss of a wider Hellenic world, including the loss of the 'Panhellenic centre' of the time, Constantinople, as had once happened with other great cities such as Alexandria, Antioch and Ctesiphon, which were once centres of Hellenism.[25] The historian asked what advantage could accrue to the nation from such a loss, which he connected with the arguments of the critics of the Great Idea.

This was the climate in Greek political thought in the 1890s, in the wake of Paparrigopoulos's redefinition and reordering of Greek history. The wider acceptance and integration of this outlook into the collective 'mentality' of Greek society at the time is reflected neatly in the pages of literary works which may be assumed to register the sensibilities and aspirations prevailing in their cultural environment. From the 1870s on, beginning with Valaoritis, and with greater density from the 1880s, with Papadiamantis's early novels *The Merchants of Nations* (1882) and especially *The Gypsy Girl* (1884) (see Robert Shannan Peckham's contribution to the present volume, Chapter 8), the imagery of Byzantium, the sense of loss over its fall combined with a resilient pride over its greatness, is increasingly felt in Greek poetry and prose. So we meet with Palamas's great epic creations on Byzantine themes after the turn of the twentieth century and with Penelope Delta's novels, by means of which the solicitude for Byzantium percolated to the widest possible audience, including the younger generations of the reading public. (On these works, see respectively Anthony Hirst's and Marianna Spanaki's papers elsewhere in this volume, Chapters 9 and 10).

[25] P. Karolidis, *Anamniseis Skandinavikai* (1890), 177–81.

If, on the basis of what has been said so far, we consider the impact of Paparrigopoulos's work on the Greek mind, we shall also appreciate the extent of one of the endemic confusions about the Great Idea. As a project for the resurrection of the Byzantine Empire in the shape of an expanded modern Greek state, the Great Idea was a late nineteenth-century development and was ideologically to a large extent the product of political manipulations of Paparrigopoulos's historical theories. In these uses of the popularized and vulgarized by-products of the new theories of Greek national continuity the Greek Crown played an active part, trying to enhance its own legitimacy by appropriating some of the symbols of the Byzantine monarchical tradition. The Danish dynasty was a genuine successor to its Bavarian predecessor in dreaming of Constantinople as the rightful seat of Greek monarchy. This dream, however, was not limited to the Crown and to the exponents of royalism. It had a wider appeal, which appeared to be vindicated by the triumphs of the Balkan Wars in 1912–13 and acted as an ideological catalyst which, despite warnings and more sober counsels, drove Greece into Asia Minor in 1919. The power of the Great Idea as a Byzantine idea seems to have taken hold even over Venizelos's better judgement at this juncture. That, however, is another story, in which power politics at the end of the First World War played a more decisive role than the ideological residues of political romanticism in a materialist age.

One tentative conclusion seems to suggest itself, I think, from the reappraisal of the historical record attempted in this paper. As a 'Byzantine idea' the Great Idea was a latecomer to Greek politics, never commanded universal acceptance among the political class and was rather short-lived: its historical trajectory as a politically effective national ideology ran from about the 1880s to 1922, when it ended in tragedy, launching Greece into the twentieth century full of traumas, anxieties and uncertainties.

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4

Byzantine law as practice and as history in the nineteenth century

Caroula Argyriadis-Kervégan

How nineteenth-century Greek jurists situated themselves in relation to Byzantium and the Byzantine world is not, for the non-specialist, easy to understand. It is not obvious why Greek jurists of the nineteenth century felt it necessary to define their identity in relation to the Byzantine nation and the laws it had developed from the sixth century to the fourteenth. However, there are frequent examples of this type of phenomenon among nations trying to determine their identity – notably the German nation, which, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, had to define its identity in response to the major political and cultural restructuring it was experiencing.[1] The relationship of the Greeks to Byzantium in the nineteenth century involved a similar state of mind. In attempting to establish an identity they emphasized the differences between them and the 'enemy', in this case the Ottoman Empire, and reclaimed their origins. Their origins were to be found partly in antiquity and partly in the Byzantine Empire. The relation to antiquity revealed linguistic continuity, while Byzantium suggested the search for the continuity of the nation in the Orthodox confession.

In the general framework of the quest for national identity throughout the nineteenth century, each group of intellectuals in modern Greek society tended to define the nation's character in terms of its own particular field of interest, and jurists were no exception. Just as religion, language and ethnic origins were considered to be the cornerstones of national identity, so too was the law.[2] In order to establish its identity each group explored its roots,

[1] See Fr. Wieacker, *Privatrechtsgeschichte der Neuzeit* (Göttingen, 1967), 348 ff. with reference in particular to J. G. Fichte's *Discours à la nation allemande*, given in Berlin in 1807–8.

[2] See in particular E. Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* (1882; repr. with introduction by R.

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including those found in the legal domain. This approach was initiated in Germany by the Historical School of Law. By studying the reception and evolution of Roman law in Germany, this movement tried to define the identity of the German people with greater clarity.[3] In like manner, the Greek jurists constructed an identity for the Greek nation out of Byzantine law, taking up positions for or against it. From the time when the Greeks began to fight for their independence from the Ottoman Empire – in other words, from the time when the formation of an independent state became a possibility – the question of the law and the legal tradition was to the fore.

But before considering Byzantine law in the nineteenth-century context, one needs first to clarify the official position in the law as a whole and its role in legal life. Modern Greece had to take into account a pre-existing situation: that, from the outset of the Revolution, constitutional texts endowed Byzantine law with the status of the official source of civil law. Indeed, alongside custom, the laws of the Byzantine emperors were the main source of Greek civil law until the drawing up of the Civil Code, the Penal Code and the Commercial Law.[4] In the field of civil law, allegiance to the sources of Byzantine law was the official policy in Greece throughout the nineteenth century, and legal texts from after the War of Independence confirm the importance of Byzantine law as the source of civil law.

In a decree of 15 December 1828, Capodistrias, the governor of the independent state from 1828 to 1831, removed the vague clause, 'the laws of our Byzantine emperors of eternal memory', which had figured in the revolutionary constitutions (1821–27) and instituted the Hexabiblos as the source of civil law.[5] The Hexabiblos was a compendium established by Constantine Harmenopoulos in the fourteenth century. Likewise, decree 152 from 15/27 August 1830 specified that the tribunals should consult, and apply, the laws of the Byzantine emperors included in the Hexabiblos.

But the official document which definitively organized private law for the whole of the nineteenth century, and up to the publication of the present Civil Code in 1946, was the decree of 23 February 1835. This document, which dates from the regency (during the minority of King Otho), is entirely in keeping with the trend: it lays down that the civil laws of the Byzantine emperors included in the Hexabiblos would remain in force until such a time as a civil code was published. Aside from its longevity, this document is important for an additional reason: it was the first legislative document to

Girardet, Paris, 1996). (For Renan, however, language and religion were not the principal constituents of nationhood.)

[3] See F. C. v. Savigny, 'Ueber den Zweck dieser Zeitschrift', in *Zeitschrift für geschichtliche Rechtswissenschaft*, 1 (1815), 1–12.

[4] Epidaurus Constitution (1822), art. 98; Astros Constitution (1823), art. 80; Troizen Constitution (1827), art. 142.

[5] Art. 38; see also Alexis Politis's contribution in the present volume (Chapter 1).

acknowledge that custom should have equal weight with law. 'Those customs, which a long and uninterrupted habit or legal decisions have consecrated, prevail where they have established themselves.' This decree imposed Byzantine law once and for all in Greece.

But, apart from these official documents, what was the attitude of jurists towards this ancient, rather disorganized, and somewhat unfamiliar body of law? To answer this question it is necessary to examine the position of practitioners and theoreticians in relation to Byzantine law, and I shall therefore turn now to an analysis of the approaches of these two groups.

Under Ottoman rule, the Orthodox Christian population enjoyed a degree of freedom to decide cases related to family and inheritance according to their own law, and before the judge of their choice.[6] Thus, alongside the law of custom, Byzantine and post-Byzantine sources were the main part of the civil law applicable to the Greek population. Among these sources Harmenopoulos' manual was, it is evident, particularly important: this compendium, translated into modern Greek, was frequently reprinted.[7] And yet, despite the fact that it acted as a well-known law source, an analysis of the judges' use of it during the War of Independence shows clearly that Byzantine law, and above all the Harmenopoulos manual, provoked ambivalent reactions among legal practitioners. There are of course regular examples of the use of this manual from the beginning of the modern Greek state, but these almost natural recourses to Byzantine law are accompanied by a series of questions about it as a source of law.

One might, for example, cite the comment made by the prefect of Pyrgos who confessed to the Minister of Justice that Harmenopoulos was 'obscure and hard to understand'. This was why, in order to resolve a case, the prefect employed 'natural reason' and 'the laws of Europe'.[8] A letter from the Ministry of Justice describes this uneasy encounter with Byzantine law in even more eloquent terms: according to the Ministry, the Harmenopoulos manual did not possess general validity in Greece, with the result that its value as a source of law was put in question. In the context of a case relating to inheritance law, the Ministry debated whether it was fair for the government to adopt a solution based on Byzantine law, which was contradictory to the approach of enlightened European states.[9]

[6] See *Istoria tou Ellinikou Ethnous* (1975), 11.110 ff.; G. L. v. Maurer, *O ellinikos laos* (1976), 89 ff.; G. Geib, *Darstellung des Rechtszustandes in Griechenland* (Heidelberg, 1835), 42 ff.

[7] K. Pitsakis, *Konstantinou Armenopoulou Procheiron nomon i Exavivlos* (1971), 89 ff. and 73 ff. on the different editions of the Hexabiblos.

[8] Act of 4.3.1825/Pyrgos, Minister of Justice, File 15, General State Archives. See also C. Argyriadis, *Staatsbilder und Rechtspraktiken, Das juristisch-politische Profil der Entstehung des neugriechischen Staates (1821–1827)* (Frankfurt am Main, 1994), 170.

[9] Ibid., 172; J. Visvizis, *I politiki dikaiosini kata tin epanastasin* (1941), 412 ff.

In both cases, then, there is a certain wariness of Byzantine law, and it is evident that the judges and judicial authorities experienced considerable difficulty in adapting the provisions of Byzantine law to the spirit and realities of modern times. In the letter cited, the Minister of Justice regretted that the Novel of Athanasios – which, according to Harmenopoulos, should have ruled in the case – had been promulgated in an entirely different age from the present era, and he noted that the result was that the Novel did not correspond to the spirit of the times. Thus, for all that Byzantine law was the official source, and, so to speak, the 'natural' law, it nevertheless sometimes encountered opposition from the public, which demanded an up-to-date, modern law in keeping with the law of the enlightened European countries.

A few years later, the decree of 23 February 1835 gave specific expression to the fact that the civil laws of the Byzantine emperors as contained in the Hexabiblos were considered to constitute the civil law of Greece. It might therefore be supposed that, as of that time, the tribunals would have had no doubt or hesitation with regard to Byzantine law – but in fact questions and doubts were expressed in the courts. An 1839 decision made by the court of appeal in Athens is a good example of the sophistries that interested parties sometimes employed. The case concerned inheritance law; the party making the appeal claimed that the laws of the Byzantine emperors were not in force in 1823 (the date of the case), since the laws were not then published, as they should have been. In its ruling, the court's response was that at that time no law prescribed the publication of laws, and that furthermore the Byzantine laws were neither new nor foreign to Greece, so that their publication was neither required nor necessary.[10] This incident provides a foretaste of the problems which the Byzantine law and the Harmenopoulos compendium entailed. In this case it is clear that the plaintiff's petition was a sophistry; nevertheless, it also shows that there was no unanimous opinion in relation to the content and validity of Byzantine law.

It is true that the text of the decree of 23 February 1835 did not facilitate the jurists' task. Its ambiguous formula – 'the laws of the Byzantine emperors which are contained in Harmenopoulos' Hexabiblos' – invites recourse to all of Byzantine law, including laws previous to the Hexabiblos. During the nineteenth century German Byzantinists published the legislative corpus of the Byzantine period, thus providing those in court with the possibility and freedom to appeal to any legislative provisions in the whole of the Byzantine period or even to go back to the Roman era. As a result there

[10] The judgement was published in *Evretirio Ellinikis Nomologias*, ed. N. Ioannidis (1847), 434 ff.; see also N. Pantazopoulos, *Apo tis logias paradoseos eis ton astikon kodika* (1947), 276, n. 6.

arose a great debate, in which both practitioners and theoreticians took part, about which Byzantine laws were really in force in Greece. The important issue in this context is to identify the impact of this discussion on the validity of Byzantine law and the debate's eventual outcome.

Initially, during the 1830s, jurisprudence restricted itself to the Harmenopoulos compendium. According to an 1837 ruling, the laws contained in the Hexabiblos were the only laws in force in terms of the decree of 23 February 1835.[11] But soon there appeared a tendency to extend the sources of the law in force to Harmenopoulos's own sources, going back as far as the Basilics – that is, to the ninth century – and the tribunals adopted this approach.[12] But a practical difficulty then emerged, for the legislative Byzantine texts which were the sources of the Harmenopoulos manual were not available in Greece. This obstacle was soon overcome with the Greek translation of Ferdinand Mackeldey's manual of Roman law by G. Rallis and M. Renieris (1838), which was supplemented with references to the Basilics. As a result, the sources of Byzantine law which had previously been unavailable to judges were made accessible.[13] In legal practice there were therefore many instances of the use of Byzantine sources, not always confined to the Hexabiblos; such use was not a result of first-hand studies of the sources by the jurists, but rather their use of Mackeldey.[14] The debate on whether Harmenopoulos's sources were valid sources for contemporary Greek law re-emerged in the second half of the century, particularly after 1859 in relation to a specific problem, namely interest-bearing loans.

This question as a whole has been discussed by Spyridon Troianos; I shall limit myself to emphasizing a specific point directly related to this topic.[15] The starting-point of the discussion was the decision by the Supreme Court of Appeal that lacunae in the Hexabiblos should be filled by the law of custom. (According to the decree of 1835, where there is a lacuna in the law, custom should prevail.) It so happens that Harmenopoulos does includes a rule prohibiting interest-bearing loans, though shortly after coming into effect this rule was modified by Novel 83 of the Emperor Leo VI. But since this annulment and later legislation were not contained in the Hexabiblos, the Supreme Court of Appeal asserted that the Harmenopoulos manual had

[11] *Efimeris Nomiki*, 1st year, nos 9–10, pp. 99 ff.

[12] Cf. S. Troianos, 'Von der Hexabiblos zu den Basiliken', *Subsceciva Groningana*, 3 (1989), 127–41 (135). The Basilics gathered together all the imperial legislative production from the Oriental Empire until their writing, with the exception of the Justinianic corpus.

[13] See Pantazopoulos, *Apo tis logias paradoseos*, 276 ff.

[14] Cf. N. Pantazopoulos, *Astikos Kodix kai ethnikon dikaion* (1945), 27 ff.; Troianos, 'Von der Hexabiblos zu den Basiliken', 136.

[15] Troianos, 'Von der Hexabiblos zu den Basiliken'. For a more detailed analysis, see his 'I peripeteia tou vyzantinou dikaiou stin Ellada tou 19ou ai.: i periptosi ton tokon', *Praktika 16ou Panelliniou Istorikou Synedriou* (Thessaloniki, 1996), 221–33.

a lacuna in relation to this question which was filled by custom. On this basis the Court authorized interest-bearing loans and the capitalization of interest (compound interest, *anatokismos*) in circumstances where this ruling would not contradict custom. Some jurists contested this decision, claiming that the law in force in Greece was not the Hexabiblos, but rather the Basilics, since the Hexabiblos was only mentioned in the decree of 1835 because it was readily available for consultation. From this perspective interest-bearing loans, particularly in a usurious form, were prohibited by the Basilics' rulings and by Justinianic legislation. Following these objections, the Supreme Court of Appeal modified its ruling, and in 1860 adopted a position according to which interest was strictly controlled by the law, with the result that usury was unlawful in Greece.[16]

One of the most eminent Greek jurists of the nineteenth century, Pavlos Kalligas, a student of Friedrich Carl von Savigny and a partisan of the Historical School, took part in this debate. I shall consider his argument in particular because of the central position he held among Greek jurists of the nineteenth century.[17] Kalligas held that the law should be restricted to the Harmenopoulos compendium and that it was not necessary to have recourse to other, earlier sources. He appealed to the necessity for the law to be founded on a precise text so as to avoid the risk of a ruling's being contradicted or overturned at any moment by the chance discovery of a previously unknown legal manuscript.[18] Thus Kalligas's argument was based, first of all, on an imperative of juridical security: the legal rules in force should be certain and known to all. But this was not the most important point in the discussion: Kalligas also criticized those who claimed that the Basilics had the force of law. In his view, the notion that the Basilics represented the law in force in Greece under Ottoman rule was a *fictio iuris*, since the Corpus of this compilation was nowhere to be found. Consequently, the Hexabiblos alone constituted the effective civil law. This was the attitude of a partisan of modernization faced with the problem of the definition of an applicable civil law, and concerned, in the context of law and economic relations, to detach his country from the past and lead it into the modern world:

> Our legislature, which has established as a principle that laws should be published and brought before the citizens before entering into effect, selected an already widely accessible and very well known book out of the immense chaos of Byzantine legislation, and gave it the force of civil law in order to avoid uncertainty. Those people who regret not being able to resuscitate the kingdom of Byzantium intact, in the state in which it was when it collapsed, as a result of its own faults and weaknesses, will certainly not be pleased to see that so many of the Byzantine Emperors' laws have been eliminated, as they were by the Nomophylax of Thessalonica [Harmenopoulos].[19]

[16] See the judgement of the Supreme Court of Appeal, as well as the reply of the partisans for a ruling limiting the amount of interest, in *Pararterna tis Themidos* (1864), 21, 109 ff.

[17] See K. Kairophylas, *Pavlos Kalligas, i zoi kai to ergo tou* (1937); also *Juristen, ein biographisches Lexikon* (Munich, 1995), 333.

[18] *Neoi Pandektai* (1907), X, 441–7; see also Troianos, 'Von der Hexabiblos'.

This passage is patently ironic in tone. The attachment to Byzantine law was a cult of the past, ultimately the Middle Ages, but it was more important to look to the future, and this was why Kalligas praised the drafter of the decree of 23 February 1835. For Kalligas, the predominance of custom over law was itself a step towards modernity, for he saw custom as the path a society develops in the move towards the future, leaving behind obsolete legislation:

> The legislature has not tried to draw society back to the past, rather it has tried to direct it towards the future. And it has not covered it with the shroud of what is dead, it has allowed it to breathe freely the breeze of a new Spring and to pursue its own evolution.[20]

These considerations are a variation on the theses of the Historical School of Law and those of Savigny in particular. It should, however, be noted that the specific context of the discussion produced an inversion of current positions within the debate on codification: in Western Europe partisans of progress favoured law over custom, while 'conservatives', such as Savigny, privileged the law of custom in order to counter the tenets of a Napoleonic type of codification. In Greece, by contrast, progress was to be developed (at least according to Kalligas) through the law of custom, as opposed to Byzantine legislation which threatened to imprison society within an obsolete past. But it is important to understand – as I hope to show shortly – that, in the view of Kalligas, Greek customary law was foreign to Byzantine law, and that it was in fact entirely Western.

Kalligas's arguments are not first and foremost those of a jurist; rather, they are those of a citizen concerned for his country's economic prosperity. 'I trust that a jurist who does not want to maintain certain juridical rules will not be criticized for being an economist when political economy has taught him that those laws have a negative effect.'[21] Kalligas declares therefore that he supports the total freedom of interest-bearing loans, on the basis that 'long experience has proved ... that freedom is a great aid to borrowers, since the interest is lowered over a long period'. He fears that a rigid regulation of loans would once again lead to an increase in rates. According to Kalligas, strict regulation would create suspicion in the relations between

[19] *Pararterna Themidos*, 117. On the subject of the (non-)existence of this work in Greece, see also Troianos, 'Von der Hexabiblos', 135.

[20] *Pararterna Themidos*, 118.

[21] Kalligas, *Neoi Pandektai* (1907), X, 445.

economic partners. Without a sufficient incentive, lenders would withdraw their capital from the market, with the result that the whole economy, and agriculture in particular, would suffer.[22] Kalligas's presentation emphasized the policies of industrialized countries: not only had they removed restrictions on interest-bearing loans, they had even made an effort to develop guarantees in favour of financial sponsors, for instance for mortgages or for registering,[23] and they had, above all, developed the banking system.[24] In addition, Kalligas gave the example of foreign countries which had failed to introduce credit regulation. According to him, industry and agriculture would not prosper in Greece if legal restrictions were imposed on loan systems. 'What industry can survive every day of its existence with no credit and no foreign capital?', he asked, adding: 'I leave it to the few Greek industries to answer this question.'[25]

Kalligas's objections to the restrictions of Byzantine legislation on interest-bearing loans derived from his concern for Greece's economic situation. In fact, the Greek economy of the years 1850–60 was mainly based on agriculture, and industry was more or less non-existent. Up to the 1870s the term 'industry' was used of almost any form of production, and primarily for manufacture;[26] the few industries that did exist were at a primitive stage in their evolution and organization.[27] This Greek industrial economy was mainly involved in the production and exportation of silk and raisins, and in neither case can one talk of an industry in the real sense of the term; it was more a matter of manufacturers employing the members of a family, without going beyond this limited circle. According to specialists, the Greek economy still had the same characteristics in the mid-nineteenth century as it had at the end of the eighteenth. One of the reasons for such backwardness was the absence of capital, which might have encouraged the emergence of potential industries; capital might have been available outside Greece from the diaspora. Furthermore, there were very few banking institutions, and these with a very restricted role: until the 1870s the National Bank of Greece, the largest establishment of the time, did not pursue the activities of a merchant

[22] Ibid., 452.

[23] Germany in particular experienced an increase in the number of mortgaging finance companies from the first decades of the nineteenth century. See H. Aubin and W. Zorn, *Handbuch der deutschen Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte* (Stuttgart, 1976), 2.411 ff., 418. The first German bank of this sort was the Bayerische Hypotheken- und Wechselbank (1834). In 1852 the first mortgaging banks funded by shareholders were created. The German mortgaging system extended elsewhere: Napoleon III tried to introduce it into France and in a decree of 28 February 1852 promoted the establishment of institutions for loans on landed property. Furthermore, the first credit banks appeared in Germany from 1848.

[24] Kalligas, *Neoi Pandektai*, 444.

[25] Ibid., 452.

[26] G. Dertilis, *To xitima ton Trapezon, 1871–1873* (1980), 50.

[27] Ibid.; see also C. Agriantoni, *Oi aparches tis ekviomichanisis stin Ellada* (1986), 53 ff.

bank. It was mainly concerned with issuing money, in a monopoly entrusted to it by the state; it was also a savings bank, but as an institution it was not intended for investing in industry and production. Europe, on the other hand, was in the process of industrialization, from which all economic spheres profited, banks in particular. In France, for example, the Crédit Mobilier and the Crédit Foncier were founded in 1852; these two institutions, both of which were influenced by Saint-Simon, contributed greatly to the economic development of the country, to the construction of Paris and the financing of trade, industry and major works. The reputation of Crédit Mobilier only reached Greece in 1871, when the investors and bankers tried to restructure the National Bank.[28] In this respect, Kalligas should be classed among the enlightened bourgeois who observed the backward state of the Greek economy with bitterness and anxiety, and who, in the true liberal spirit of the nineteenth century, wanted to whip up the economy by means of legislation. It was in this frame of mind that Kalligas rejected any restriction on interest-bearing loans founded on Byzantine laws. In conclusion, it is therefore important to emphasize that his opposition to the use of the sources of law prior to the Harmenopoulos manual was not the expression of a purely juridical interest, but was based on economic convictions.

In the passage from 1861 quoted above, Kalligas is critical, not only of Byzantine legislation, but of the Byzantine Empire in general. This attitude is present in earlier writings, in particular in an essay from 1847 dealing with legal custom in Greece. A single thread runs through this entire text, which never misses a chance to criticize the retrograde spirit of Byzantine legislation: 'Byzantine civilization, directed by the notion of destiny, considered social life to be of no value, and when legislation dealt with it, it was only to persecute it.'[29] By contrast, in the view of Kalligas, the nineteenth century had as its principle that 'any human existence, however modest ... has a definite value'. Thus Kalligas tried to show that Greek customary law, which, according to the classical theses of the Historical School of Law, should have expressed the true character of a people, was in fact inspired by the customs of the European nations, and in particular, by those of the French.[30] Hence, he argued, Greek customary law was foreign to Byzantine mores and customs; and he emphasized the affinity of the Greek nation to the Western nations:

> The alliance of our civilization with the Western nations has come about in an unconcerted manner, and if today we are following the evolution of foreign legislation, this is not an arbitrary decision resulting from individuals or from the government. We are following the same route that the nation has shown

[28] Dertilis, *To xitima ton Trapezon*.

[29] Kalligas, 'Peri ethimon', in *Meletai kai Logoi* (1898–99), I, 205.

[30] Ibid., 193 ff.

> us, thus spontaneously giving expression to its acceptance of this approach and its identity with the Western nations in matters relating to the fundamental elements of social life.[31]

In this text, Kalligas, going beyond economic concerns, tries to establish that the path followed by the Greek people coincided with that of Western nations.

But Kalligas's challenge to Byzantium and Byzantine law went back further. In 1839 he published an essay on the drafting of the Civil Code in Greece in response to the government's announcement that the Civil Code was ready. The essay praised Roman law in the form it took thanks to the Justinianic synthesis. From this time on, Kalligas would emphasize that the only European countries which had succeeded in promulgating civil codes were those in which Roman law and its Justinianic codification had been studied by scholars over centuries. The Greek humanities and Roman law were the two schools which any nation hoping to cultivate its own literary culture and its own juridical science should study closely.[33] But , according to Kalligas, the Roman Empire (and as a consequence Roman law) ended with Justinian: after him came the era of Byzantium, and with it decline. Justinian had made an error in codifying Roman law, which, as a result, lost its vital force. After Justinian, each Novel made by a Byzantine emperor was a further dilapidation of the edifice of classical law. The ruins of this colossal building were the Basilics, from which Harmenopoulos had merely saved a heap of ransacked soil. Kalligas admired only classical Roman law: he was full of scorn for post-Justinianic Byzantine law and for the Byzantine Empire. In his view, the preference occasionally shown for Byzantine law was an error originating perhaps from the idea that modern Greece ought to replace the Byzantine Empire. The origin of this idea was religious, but Kalligas declared this conception to be a flawed one, emphasizing that the Orthodox Church was an ecumenical church and that, as a consequence, it was not attached to any particular kingdom. He even wondered what the attraction of the history of Byzantium was, given that it consisted in only a 'miserable collection of crimes and repugnant acts, in which murder sat on the throne and in which poisoning was considered a political art'.[34] He believed that it was a matter of not 'lowering the glory of the Greece which is re-emerging for the sake of the decomposed body of Byzantium'. It is, then, all too evident that from his first publications until his treaty on interest-bearing loans Kalligas maintained a consistently hostile view of the Byzantine Empire.

[31] Ibid., 204.

[32] Kalligas, 'Peri syntaxeos politikou kodikos eis tin Ellada, Diatrivi I', in *Meletai kai Logoi*, 445.

[33] Ibid., 445.

[34] Ibid., 447.

As a matter of fact, Kalligas was not alone in adopting a position critical of Byzantine law: before him, during the War of Independence, many other comments had been made from this perspective. In 1824 and 1825 there were articles in the press asking whether Byzantine law was suitable for a modern nation; one of these articles criticized the fact that the Harmenopoulos compendium involved subservient provisions out of keeping with a free state.[35] The authors who took up these positions acted in the same spirit as Kalligas: they were partisans of modernization who wanted to reconnect Greece to the spirit and conditions of Western nations. In contrast to Kalligas, however, they were not adherents of the Historical School of Law and German juridical science, but were instead admirers of the French Civil Code who hoped that Greece would adopt a similar codification. Thus it was that currents of thought which in Western Europe were systematically opposed were brought together in the Greek context by a shared hostility to Byzantium.

As Kalligas so clearly noted, the fundamental problem for Greek jurists was the question of the modern Greek state's historical heritage. After the formation of the independent state in 1833 and the decline of philhellenic sentiment in the 1830s, Greece found itself in a new situation in which, after four centuries of political non-existence, it had to affirm its position and establish a new international political status. Historical scholarship (as Alexis Politis, George Huxley and Paschalis M. Kitromilides show in their contributions to the present volume – Chapters 1, 2 and 3) provided an important contribution to this turning point or shift in the national consciousness. It also had important consequences for legal thought. Opinions such as those of Kalligas or the commentators on Harmenopoulos which I have been discussing now became quite rare: jurists now sought to rehabilitate Byzantine law and to give it a privileged position in Greek law and culture. The study of law from the Byzantine era changed so that it was no longer essentially a search for the sources of modern Greek law. In any case, the privatists who were influenced by the evolution of the Historic School of Law in Germany began to turn to the Roman law of the Pandects.[36]

Towards the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth the attitude of Greek jurists towards Byzantine law began to change. From that time on they made a clear distinction between the law in

[35] C. Argyriadis, *Staatsbilder* 138.

[36] See K.D. Triantafyllopoulos, 'To ellinikon idiotikon dikaion kata ton dekaton enaton aiona', *Panellinion lefkoma tes ethnikis ekatontaetiridos*, 3 (1924) 227 ff.; P. Zepos, 'I neotera elliniki epistimi tou Astikou Dikaiou', (1954) 22 ff.; N. Pantazopoulos, *Genesis kai anelixis tou ellinikou dikaiou mechri tou astikou kodikos* (1949) 38 ff., and *Astikos kodix kai 'ethnikon dikaion'* (1945) 28 ff.

force, in which the Pandectists' influence (and hence that of classical Roman law) was ever increasing, and Byzantine law, which became more of an object of historical research. From this was born the trend following D. Pappoulias in the historical study of Greek law from antiquity to the modern day. Pappoulias (1878–1932), a student of Ludwig Mitteis, was the first to claim that a continuity in Greek law existed from antiquity. According to him the law of classical and Hellenistic Greece, which survived alongside Roman law, and even influenced it in some points, reacquired its force during the Byzantine Empire and maintained itself during Ottoman rule.[37] Pappoulias argued that research into these Greek elements in Roman, Byzantine and post-Byzantine law would be an important contribution to the history of law and a worthy task for modern Greek jurists.[38] Thus it may be observed that the law, or to be more precise Byzantine law, had become a tool with which the jurists could show that the history of the Greek nation followed a continuous line; in this respect the jurists' work was comparable to that of the historians and of folklorists who followed N. G. Politis.

This aside, there was one entire field in which recourse to the Byzantine tradition seemed entirely fruitless, and this was the domain of economic and social law, which was obviously linked to the specific conditions of modernity. A great deal of legislation was produced in this field at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth to fill in the gaps in Roman–Byzantine law. According to the civil law specialist C. Triantafyllopoulos, this set of laws moved away from the 'individualistic' character of Justinianic law, which was primarily concerned with the protection of acquired property. The development of the economy towards the end of the nineteenth century made it necessary to protect the most disadvantaged social classes. This was the goal of legislation at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. For example, freedom of contract was limited, to the advantage of the working classes. Measures were also taken which went against the inviolability of property so dear to Roman law, in favour of landless farmers. And even in relation to the question of interest-bearing loans, discussed earlier, legislative measures were taken at the end of the last century and the beginning of the twentieth: provisions were made limiting the rate of interest to 9 per cent, and protecting creditors from fraudulent debtors. By the turn of the century, the law had ceased to have a purely liberal character and had been replaced by economic and social legislation which conformed to the new parameters of the social state and the values which this model implied.[39]

[37] See G. A. Balles, 'I kata planin en Elladi epharmogi dikaiou mipote eisachthentos' (1909), in *Meletai epi tou ischyontos Astikou Dikaiou* (1938) 141, n. 1.

[38] See D. Pappoulias, *Peri tis apostolis ton Ellinon nomikon en ti erevni tis istorias tou ellinikou dikaiou* (1928) and *To ellinikon astikon dikaion en ti istoriki aftou exelixi*, (1912) 19 ff.

Such parameters were of course at some considerable distance from Byzantium.

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[39] See D. Triantafyllopoulos, 'Le droit grec civil de 1869 à 1919', in *Les transformations du droit dans les principaux pays depuis 50 ans, Livre du Cinquantenaire de la Société de Législation comparée*, (Paris 1922) I, 219–30 (esp. 229–39).

5

Byzantium and the Greek Language Question in the nineteenth century

Peter Mackridge

The most striking development to have taken place in Greek national ideology during the nineteenth century is the complete metamorphosis of attitudes towards the Byzantine period. In this paper I shall examine the views of Greek scholars on the language of medieval Greek texts and the relation between these views and the modern Greek language controversy. I shall focus first on Adamantios Korais in the early decades of the nineteenth century, and secondly on the controversy between G. N. Hatzidakis and Giannis Psycharis at the end of the century, and I shall show how the difference between the earlier and the later views reflects the changes that occurred in mid-century in the Greek intellectual élite's attitude to Byzantium and its place in Greek history.

It was common during the period of the so-called Greek Enlightenment in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries for Greek intellectuals to adopt the Gibbonian view that Byzantium represented no more than the gradual decline and fall of the Roman Empire. Eighteenth-century Greek scholars – and Korais was one – transformed the Byzantine state into 'a medieval version of the Ottoman Empire'.[1] His contempt for the Byzantine state was equalled by his antipathy towards the Ottoman Empire of his own day and towards the Phanariots who supported it. As a democrat and a republican, Korais considered the Ottoman Empire to be not only the basest and most corrupt form of Oriental tyranny, but also the natural successor of

[1] P. A. Agapitos, 'Byzantine literature and Greek philologists in the nineteenth century', *Classica et Medievalia*, 63 (1992), 231–60 (238); I am much indebted to this thought-provoking article. Korais was one of the first Greeks to use the adjective and noun 'Byzantine', in 1803: S. A. Koumanoudis, *Synagogi neon lexeon ypo ton logion plastheison apo tis Aloseos mechri ton kath' imas chronon*, I (1900, repr. 1980), under Βυζαντινὸς and Μεσαιών.

the Byzantine state; while he looked upon the Phanariots, with their, to his mind, ludicrous and scandalous pretensions to aristocracy and nobility, both as criminal collaborators with the Ottoman regime in keeping the Greeks in slavery and ignorance and as usurpers of the power that should rightfully be vested in the Greek people. His contempt for the Byzantine emperors, the Ottoman sultans and the Phanariots resulted in his lumping them all together as a single corrupt organism feeding parasitically on the Greek people and sapping their intelligence and vitality.

Phrases which display Korais's contempt for the 'barbaric' Byzantine state abound in his vast *œuvre*. These culminate in his attack on Byzantine obscurantism in 1828, during the War of Independence, when he writes that the emperors, imitating the Persians and the Parthians, established a court of truly Asiatic luxury, where they wore Persian shoes and Persian head-dress; he describes Andronikos Komnenos as 'the Greek Nero' and alleges that Isaakios II Angelos 'lived like Sardanapalus'; he claims that 'the church of the monks' was a resort for idlers, and castigates the political machinations of the patriarchs of Constantinople. In all this he includes ample quotations from and references to Gibbon, refers to the Byzantine emperors as 'Greco-Roman kings', and even goes so far as to assert that at least the Turks saved the Greeks both from the Byzantine nobles and from the papal yoke.[2]

For Korais, of course, the true ancestors of the modern Greeks were the ancient Hellenes. He called the ancient Greeks 'Hellenes' and the modern Greeks '*Graikoi*' – a name he claimed to be an older term for the Greeks even than the word 'Hellenes', as well as being the term by which the Greeks are known in Europe. For him the name by which the modern Greeks commonly designated themselves in his day ('*Romioi*') was a source of national shame, since it preserved the memory of their subjection to the Romans, which was one of the many lamentable stages in the whole sorry history of the Greek people since its conquest by the Macedonian kings.[3] The Byzantine empire was, for Korais, simply the continuation of Roman rule over the Greeks; worse, as we have just seen, the 'Greco-Roman kings', far from trying to emulate the classical Greeks, imitated the Greeks' barbarian Oriental enemies, thus paving the way for the takeover of their empire by a totally Oriental people.

There was, in Korais's view, a direct correlation between a nation's language and its moral character, and a people could be morally excellent only when free. Thus it was impossible that the corrupt Byzantines should have expressed themselves in anything but a corrupt language. For Korais classical

[2] A. Korais, *Atakta*, I (Paris 1828), ix–xi, xxxvi, xli.

[3] See, e.g., Korais, *Atakta*, I, xlviii, and II (Paris, 1829), xxv, and Alexis Politis's contribution to the present volume, Chapter 1.

Greek was 'the language of liberty'.[4] Nevertheless he realized, unlike archaists such as Neofytos Doukas, that 'the resurrection of the dead' was a practical impossibility. His aim was not to revive the language of classical Hellas but to repair some of the damage that the Greek language had suffered as a result of the ignorance and moral corruption that had ensued from the Greek people's two-thousand-year enslavement. Only in this way could the Greeks be brought out of their state of ignorance and regain a language fit for a free people.

Korais believed that every nation, before it becomes civilized, has a single language. Once it gains civilization, however, it possesses two languages: the older continues to be spoken by the vulgar, while the civilized speak and write a more elegant one.[5] Once a nation's civilization is destroyed by slavery, the whole nation, its writers included, lapses into its former barbarism, and writers, instead of setting forth rules and examples for the vulgar, take the vulgar as their guide.[6] The vulgar speech of the ancients, he believed, was probably not very different from the vulgar speech of the modern Greeks;[7] by this I think he meant that it was similar in its quality rather than in its actual forms. Just as the ancients had to regulate and embellish the speech of the vulgar so as to provide themselves with a cultivated written language, so the modern Greeks needed to regulate and embellish their own vulgar speech. Note in all this Korais's refusal, common at the time, to see ancient and modern Greek as two distinct chronological stages in the history of the language; instead, at least here, he seems to see the 'vulgar' tongue as having coexisted with the 'elegant' and 'civilized' language in ancient times.

For Korais, the historical study of the Greek language in its decline from its classical perfection was essential to this task of restitution. Only by studying the medieval and modern language in depth could one ascertain which ancient features had survived, intact or in corrupt form, so that the modern language could be 'repaired' according to classical standards; this was, to his mind, quite different from adopting classical Greek as such. Korais considered Byzantine vernacular texts to be invaluable sources of evidence for the medieval

[4] 'Language is the very nation' (Korais, *Atakta*, II, xxi); A. Korais, *Allilografia, 2: 1799–1809* (1966), 122 (letter of 27 November 1803 to Andreas Idromenos at Parga, counselling him that if he taught ancient Greek to the children of the defiant Souliots he 'would give them a gift incomparably more useful than Prometheus' fire').

[5] Korais, *Atakta*, II, xxi.

[6] Interestingly, in an attack on the *laissez-faire* attitude to language adopted in her Reith Lectures by the Rupert Murdoch Professor of Language and Communication at Oxford in the *Times Literary Supplement* of 12 April 1996, the Wykeham Professor of Logic perpetuates the views adopted by Korais when he talks about 'entropy' in language and the need for 'maintenance work' in order to preserve a language's precision and expressiveness.

[7] Korais, *Atakta*, II, xxiv.

state of the corrupt language of the Greek race.[8] Such a study would enable the Greeks to determine which words in the vulgar tongue were of Greek origin and to root out the 'ἀλλόφυλοι λέξεις' (literally, 'words of another race'):[9] this adjective suggests that one of the features of the Byzantine Empire that alienated Korais was its multi-racial character, just as what he objected to most about the language of Byzantine literature was its mixed (and hence 'impure') nature, for example the 'ἀηδέστατος μακαρονισμός' ('repulsive macaronism') of the romance *Velthandros and Chrysantza*, and the 'ἀηδέστατος μιξοβαρβαρισμός' (i.e. the mixture of ancient Greek and barbaric features) that characterizes the *Spaneas*.[10]

As early as 1809 Korais had called for a dictionary of post-classical Greek, among whose sources would be the Byzantine authors.[11] Interestingly, when he talks of the language of Byzantine writers he does not mean imitations of classical linguistic models but those texts (or those aspects of usage) that deviate from the classical standard. It is also indicative that he fails to list the modern spoken language as a source of items for the dictionary; like Psycharis after him, Korais was cut off from the living language as it was naturally spoken in the Greco-Turkish world.

In the *Atakta* Korais published the first edition of two of the Prodromic poems, together with an extensive linguistic commentary (in volume I, 1828), and provided two alphabetical lists of words which he had compiled, the first from a number of medieval Greek texts (volume II, 1829), and the second from the dictionaries of Du Cange, Somavera, and others (volume IV, 1832). He justifies his study of the Prodromic poems by saying that his aim has been

> to learn (not to teach others) the difference between our common tongue and the language commonly spoken almost 700 years ago; to investigate what it has gained and what it has lost during that long period, and what are the means for increasing its gains and reducing its losses.[12]

Note here the vocabulary of profit and loss that Korais has retained from his days as a merchant!

His word-list in volume II is based on *Velthandros*, the *Spaneas*, *Tamurlane*, *Apollonios*, the *Erotokritos*, the *Batrachomyomachia*, and works by Georgillas and Sachlikis. He notes bitterly that while Henricus Stephanus enjoyed, as

[8] A. Korais, *Prolegomena stous archaious Ellines syngrafeis*, I (1984), 428 (from the preface to the third volume of his edition of Plutarch, 1811); for the image of the centuries-long period of barbarian rule as a single 'night of slavery' cf. Andreas Kalvos' poem 'O Okeanos' (1826), stanza 1.

[9] Korais, *Prolegomena*, I, 499 (from the fourth volume of his Plutarch, 1812).

[10] Korais, *Atakta*, II, viii, xii.

[11] Korais, *Prolegomena*, I, 327–8 (from the first volume of his Plutarch, 1809).

[12] Korais, *Atakta*, I, v.

the reward for his long toil, the pleasure of reading the glorious ancient Greek authors, Du Cange 'drank a cup of wormwood and gall every hour, reading such a mass of barbarous prose and verse writings of which I could bear to read no more than ten'.[13]

To sum up the importance of medieval texts for Korais, he saw linguistic material from medieval texts (a) as representative of spoken modern Greek, since the process of barbarization began so long ago that the time-gap between the twelfth and the nineteenth centuries was not significant, and (b) as containing survivals from ancient Greek that could be cleaned and restored, like artefacts buried in the ground since ancient times which have suffered the effects of damp, erosion and encrustation. He saw these artefacts as tools for thinking with, which had become distorted through misuse and needed to be beaten back into their proper shape. Furthermore, since he believed that the Greek nation had reverted to its former barbarity, it is as though the language of medieval texts contains the pristine words and forms that existed before the classical Greeks polished and refined them; his task, and that of his contemporaries, was to carry out the same process once again.

Not long after the War of Independence, some Greek intellectuals began to feel uncomfortable about the two-thousand-year gap between ancient and modern Greece, and to fill what Dimaras called 'the void of Byzantium'.[14] The dogma of the continuity of Greek culture from ancient to modern times by way of Byzantium, chiefly formulated by Zambelios and Paparrigopoulos from the early 1850s, led naturally to the idea that the language of Byzantine literature was an integral part of the uninterrupted history of the Greek language. Zambelios's use of Byzantium to supply the missing element in the triadic (or even Trinitarian) schema ancient–medieval–modern[15] and Paparrigopoulos's inclusion of Byzantium in his formulation of the three civilizing missions of Hellenism in ancient, medieval and modern times[16] were part of what Agapitos calls 'the rehabilitation of Byzantium'[17] and Elli Skopetea 'the complete Hellenization of Byzantium'.[18]

[13] Ibid., II, xvi. Korais's opinion of Byzantine learned literature was equally low: as early as 1804 he had written that in the time of Eustathius of Thessalonica 'the novels of Theodore and Niketas were written, and various other barbarous writings saw the light, which deserve to be hidden under the ground till the end of time' (Korais, *Prolegomena*, I, 35; from his open letter to A. Vasileiou, published in his edition of Heliodorus's *Aethiopica*, 1804).

[14] K. Th. Dimaras, *Neoellinikos Diafotismos* (4th edn, 1985), 295.

[15] S. Zambelios, *Asmata dimotika tis Ellados meta meletis peri mesaionikou ellinismou* (Corfu, 1852), 5–595.

[16] E. Skopetea, *To 'protypo vasileio' kai i Megali Idea. Opseis tou ethnikou provlimatos stin Ellada (1930–1880)* (2nd edn, 1988), 181.

[17] Agapitos, 'Byzantine Literature', 239.

[18] Skopetea, *Protypo*, 129.

Whereas Korais talks about 'the Greco-Roman kings', Paparrigopoulos prefers expressions such as 'the medieval Greek state', and 'our medieval monarchy'.[19] As Dimaras points out, Paparrigopoulos saw that Byzantium had imposed unity and the concept of the state[20] – something that the ancient city-states had been incapable of achieving – and, what is more, it had ensured the Christianization of the Greeks and other peoples of the East.[21] (See further George Huxley's contribution to the present volume, Chapter 2.) Thus, for Paparrigopoulos, the Byzantine state was not only one of the national medieval states that contributed decisively to the creation of modern Europe,[22] but the model and forerunner of the modern Greek state. Byzantium fitted the vision of Greater Hellenism enshrined in the Great Idea, since it provided the model for 'the expansion of the State in geographical space and historical time'.[23] It was logical that the medieval Greek language should likewise have become accepted as an essential part of the history of Greek.

But even those who praised Byzantium and saw much that was positive in the Greek Middle Ages, Zambelios and Paparrigopoulos included, had a low opinion of Byzantine literature.[24] Byzantine texts were still treated in the nineteenth century as historical sources,[25] and as 'monuments of the Greek language', a term used by Mavrofrydis to refer to the seven Byzantine texts he published in 1866[26] and later employed by Hatzidakis and Psycharis alike.

Such was the situation – a grudging respect for medieval Greek vernacular literature as containing valuable evidence for the historical development of the Greek language, yet little serious study of that language in the context of the history of Greek – when the controversy between the thirty-three-year-old Hatzidakis (born exactly a hundred years after Korais but sharing many of his views) and the twenty-seven-year-old Psycharis began in 1881. This controversy was to last, almost unremittingly, for nearly half a century until Psycharis's death in 1929.[27]

Like Korais, Psycharis lived in Paris, cut off from the living development of Greek as spoken and written in Greece; he therefore believed that, in

[19] K. Paparrigopoulos, *Istoria tou ellinikou ethnous* (2nd edn, 1886), XIII, 12, 14.

[20] K. Th. Dimaras, *Ellinikos Romantismos* (1982), 236.

[21] Cf. ibid., 404.

[22] Agapitos, 'Byzantine literature', 239.

[23] Ibid., 235–6.

[24] Ibid., 240–41.

[25] See, e.g., S. P. Lambros, Prologue to *Michaiil Akominatou tou kai Choniatou ta sozomena* ... (1879), I, xli.

[26] D. I. Mavrofrydis, *Eklogi mnimeion tis neoteras ellinikis glossis*, I (1866).

[27] For historical accounts of the controversy by the two protagonists see G. N. Hatzidakis, *Mesaionika kai nea ellinika*, I (1905), 356–9, and Psycharis, *Megali romeiki epistimoniki grammatiki*, I (1929), 31–71.

comparison with Hatzidakis, he could take both a more objective view of the past and present situation of Greek and a more radical attitude towards what needed to be done in the future. Hatzidakis, by contrast, was plunged into the realities of written and spoken language use in Greece, and although he sometimes acknowledged that the situation was not perfect, he refused to countenance any alternative.

Both these linguists saw medieval Greek as the key to the understanding of the development of the Greek language since ancient times. Unlike Korais, Hatzidakis and Psycharis said nothing derogatory about the Byzantine state.[28] They were united in viewing the Greek Middle Ages as integral to the history of the language and essential to an understanding of its development. Whereas for Korais the Greek written between the fourth and the fifteenth centuries AD was Byzantine and was to be discarded after it had fulfilled its purpose of supplying the language reformer with his raw material, for both Hatzidakis and Psycharis this language was medieval and thus constituted an essential link in the continuous chain that united modernity with antiquity.

Yet their conclusions from their studies of medieval Greek (which were undoubtedly in turn biased by their preconceptions) were quite antithetical. Hatzidakis claimed that Byzantine vernacular literature was written in an artificial mixture of ancient and modern features; this suited his argument that the Greeks had always written in a language containing a mixture of spoken and traditional written features. Psycharis, by contrast, concluded that what appears to us today to be an artificial mixture of popular and learned forms is in fact a faithful representation of the language spoken at the time, when ancient and modern forms were vying for dominance; this suited his argument that the Greeks had always written in the spoken language. Psycharis asserted that what he termed 'l'affectation savante' dated only from the time of Korais, Doukas and Kodrikas, and not before.[29] Ultimately, both Hatzidakis and Psycharis implied, each in his own way, that the Greeks of their time should continue to do what each of them claimed they had always been doing in the past.

While Hatzidakis agreed with Korais that the possession of a single language (what he called 'τὸ μονόγλωσσον') was a characteristic of barbarian peoples, that is, newly emerging nations,[30] he was fully aware of the diachronic development of languages in general, and of Greek in particular.

[28] Psycharis's attitude changed later: see his attack on Byzantium in *Megali romeiki*, I, 92: 'The whole of Byzantium, with its false language, managed to achieve only one thing: to stifle the imagination and the poetry of the Greek people.'

[29] J. Psichari, *Essais de grammaire historique néo-grecque*, 1 (Paris, 1886), 188.

[30] G. N. Hatzidakis, 'Peri tou glossikou zitimatos en Elladi', in K. Krumbacher, *To provlima tis neoteras grafomenis ellinikis* (1905), 809.

Nor did he share Korais's contempt for spoken Greek. We can appreciate the multifarious changes that had come about in the fifty years since Korais's death when we observe that in 1884 Hatzidakis wrote: 'the political slavery of the nation was sealed in 1453, and its linguistic servitude in 1669'.[31] According to this schema the 'slavery' of the Greeks began with the fall of Constantinople, not two thousand years ago; furthermore, the language of Cretan Renaissance literature is viewed (by a Cretan, it is true!) as having formed the potential basis for the development of a linguistic medium suitable for all the cultural needs of the modern Greeks – a development tragically cut short by the Ottoman conquest. After the conquest of Crete, most learned writing was done in a mixed language, with the consequence that the demotic was left uncultivated. Hatzidakis expressed the view that demotic could not be adopted for written use until after it had been studied and enriched – a vicious circle that Psycharis felt could only be broken by the publication of his demoticist manifesto, *Τὸ Ταξίδι μου* (*My Journey*) in 1888.

Of the two scholars, Psycharis was the first to devote a substantial body of writing to the study of medieval Greek. His conclusions, published in his *Essais de grammaire historique néo-grecque* in 1886, were that medieval Greek vernacular texts faithfully represented the spoken language of the time; and he compiled statistical tables purporting to show the progressive diminution of ancient and the corresponding increase of modern forms during the period between the twelfth and the seventeenth centuries, culminating in what he claimed to be the definitive triumph of modern forms in *Erofili*, which he dated to about 1610. This was, he argued, the moment at which modern Greek made its entry into the world as a new language, clearly distinct from ancient Greek; in *Erofili* modern Greek had reached its *telos*.[32] The dating of any medieval Greek text could be achieved, Psycharis claimed, by an examination of the percentage of ancient and modern forms contained in it.

There are a number of fallacies in Psycharis's argument, which Hatzidakis quite rightly pointed out; indeed, it was Psycharis's views expressed in the *Essais*, coupled with the practical application of his conclusions in the *Taxidi*, that drove Hatzidakis to interrupt his study of modern Greek and to concentrate his attention on the medieval language.[33] One flaw in Psycharis's argument was that he concentrated exclusively on the study of morphological changes, which he examined in isolation from phonology and syntax;[34]

[31] G. N. Hatzidakis, *Meleti epi tis neas ellinikis i Vasanos tou Elenchou tou Psevdattikismou* (1884), 82.

[32] See, e.g., Psichari, *Essais*, 173–4.

[33] Hatzidakis, *Mesaionika*, I, 356.

[34] See, e.g., Psichari, *Essais*, 164–5, where he claims that such a separation is justified in the study of Greek, unlike the case of the Romance languages; also 264.

Hatzidakis, on the other hand, had a more developed sense of a language as a system in which all features are interdependent.[35] Secondly, Psycharis confined his study to texts dating from the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries, ignoring the evidence for the development of Greek provided by texts written between the New Testament and the *Spaneas*.[36]

Psycharis's schema of the history of Greek consisted of a point of departure, namely ancient Greek, a point of arrival, namely modern Greek, and a set of intermediate stages at which the two languages, ancient and modern, were struggling for dominance.[37] His view was that an ancient language gradually disappears and is replaced by a new one. Modern forms make their appearance, struggle with the old, and eventually prevail. Until this occurs, ancient and modern forms coexist in the language; then the modern language severs its links with the past and forms itself into a new language in opposition to the old.[38] Elsewhere in the *Essais* Psycharis talks of 'l'oubli graduel de l'ancienne langue' and the gradual substitution of one language for another.[39] This presupposes the natural coexistence of two morphologically distinct linguistic systems, ancient Greek and modern Greek (not 'popular' and 'learned'[40]), in the medieval spoken language.

Psycharis's curiously teleological view of language change was perhaps influenced by an agonistic reading of evolutionary theory: just as the nearest ancestor of man coexisted with *Homo sapiens*, which prevailed while the former became extinct, so with each morphological feature of Greek: the old and the new coexisted until the new prevailed and the old died out. At all events, Psycharis employs many metaphors, which could easily be criticized by Hatzidakis as misleading. He writes, for instance, that the young element struggles with the survivors of the old element and seeks to supplant it in people's memories, a metaphor that seems to ascribe some sort of volition, as well as a teleology, to the modern language.[41] We may see the emphasis which Psycharis, himself a highly contentious personality,[42] placed on 'struggle' as a projection of the modern language controversy back into medieval times.

[35] See, e.g., Hatzidakis, *Mesaionika*, I, 371 (original German version in G.N. Hatzidakis, *Einleitung in die neugriechische Grammatik* [Leipzig, 1892], 12).

[36] Hatzidakis, *Mesaionika*, I, 485 (*Einleitung*, 236–7).

[37] Psichari, *Essais*, 226.

[38] Ibid., 163–4.

[39] Ibid., 226, 229; his expression 'l'oubli ...' appears to be metaphorical; he does not seem to be referring to the fact that the knowledge of ancient Greek which was widespread in the Byzantine period as a result of education drastically decreased once the Byzantine education system broke down as a result of foreign conquests.

[40] Ibid., 227.

[41] Ibid., 172, 229.

[42] 'I want glory and fisticuffs' (Psycharis, *To Taxidi mou* [1888], 4).

In his attempt to refute Hatzidakis's view that the language of medieval authors presents a crude and artificial mixture of popular and learned features and is therefore useless for the historical study of the language,[43] Psycharis argued that this view is based on his observation not of medieval Greek but of modern Greek, whose written form (what Psycharis calls 'le style à la mode') is indeed an artificial mixture.[44] Thus Psycharis accuses his opponents (who at that time included Michael Deffner and Karl Krumbacher as well as Hatzidakis) of adopting an a-historical view and judging medieval Greek by modern criteria.[45] But he never answered the question, how can we know that a medieval author's mixture of ancient and modern features is not as artificial as was the *katharevousa* of the nineteenth century? Psycharis simply could not conceive that an artificially mixed written language can change over time: 'A macaronic style does not vary; it is the same at all periods', he wrote.[46] He criticizes Hatzidakis for supposing that certain forms were used in the spoken language at a certain time when no written record of them has been found from that period,[47] while he himself, by contrast, accepts practically every form found in medieval vernacular texts as a genuine feature of the spoken language. Psycharis believed that the linguistic evidence provided by medieval vernacular texts was reliable because of the very naivety of their authors; indeed, he went so far as to say that the worse written a text, the more reliable the linguistic evidence it provides.[48] The *deliberate* mixing of two languages seemed to Psycharis to be a near impossibility: it required the immense erudition, sophistication and determination of a Hatzidakis, and these were qualities that medieval authors lacked! For Psycharis, the study of medieval Greek demonstrates that modern Greek has developed in a most regular and harmonious manner,[49] and vindicates the written use of the modern demotic. Finally he argues that the purists, by going back to ancient forms, are far from establishing the continuity between the modern Greeks and their ancestors; rather, they are bringing about a break in the already existing continuity. By detaching

[43] Hadzidakis's view is restated in *Mesaionika*, I, 404, namely that the proper study of ancient Greek and modern Greek will do more to enlighten the 'dark' Middle Ages than the latter to interpret the phenomena of modern Greek. Yet by 1929 his attitude had changed: 'whoever attempts to interpret modern Greek without a knowledge of medieval Greek is deluding himself or deluding others' ('Peri tis anangis lexikou tis mesaionikis glossis', *Epetiris Etaireias Vyzantinon Spoudon*, 6 [1929], 15).

[44] Psichari, *Essais*, 209–10.

[45] Cf. ibid., 243.

[46] Ibid., 215.

[47] Ibid., 219; Psycharis seems to have objected to Hatzidakis's use of methods of historical reconstruction, such as those that have to be used when there is little or no reliable linguistic evidence from the period in question.

[48] Ibid., 225, 233.

[49] Ibid., 234.

themselves from medieval Greek, which received its forms directly from the ancient language, the purists are actually detaching themselves from ancient Greek. The Greek élite, Psycharis concludes, despises and rejects the popular language, which is the sole witness to the unbroken continuity of Greek culture from ancient to modern times.[50] Thus both Hatzidakis and Psycharis, each in his own way, were promoting continuity in language use.

The last pages of Psycharis's *Essais* are highly revealing of his frame of mind at the time when he was preparing to write the *Taxidi*. He stresses the importance of the study of medieval Greek for the creation of a modern literary language and goes on to argue that while demotic has hitherto been used by poets alone, what is now needed to establish the literary language once and for all is prose.[51] A 'grand prosateur' will be able to impose his solutions to linguistic dilemmas by *coup d'état*.[52] What is needed is 'un livre fortement pensé et senti, écrit d'une main ferme et sûre, par un esprit maître de lui-même et confiant dans sa volonté': this would be worth far more than theoretical precepts about style. 'This book,' he concludes, 'which everyone is waiting for, will undoubtedly be written one day; it is perhaps being written even at this moment.'[53] Hatzidakis later noted that, after he published his own strictures on Psycharis's statistical tables, the latter had desisted from research into medieval and modern Greek and had engaged in the language controversy, where his errors were less readily detectable.[54]

In an 'Excursus' in his *Einleitung in die neugriechische Grammatik* (1892),[55] which constituted his chief response to Psycharis's views on the nature of medieval Greek, Hatzidakis showed that the chief characteristics of spoken modern Greek had developed well before the tenth century. Like Paparrigopoulos, he was able to use linguistic evidence to support the historical argument that the Greek lands were continuously inhabited by Greek speakers and were not laid waste and then recolonized by the Byzantines.[56] It is hardly necessary to go into detail about Hatzidakis's arguments, since they are those that have prevailed – and, for the most part, rightly so – to our

[50] Ibid., 253.

[51] Ibid., 261.

[52] Ibid., 282.

[53] Ibid., 287.

[54] Hatzidakis, *Mesaionika*, I, 532–3. Psycharis does not talk about Byzantium and about medieval Greek in the *Taxidi*, though he calls himself 'Ptochoprodromos', a punning reference to Ἅγιος Ἰωάννης ὁ Πρόδρομος (remember his own first name) and the fact that his language is 'poor'; he looks forward to a 'saviour' who will succeed in imposing demotic through literature (*Taxidi*, 34–6). It may be that Psycharis had Palamas in mind when alluding to this 'saviour'.

[55] Hatzidakis, 'Über den Sprachcharakter der mittelalterlichen und neuen Autoren', *Einleitung*, 234–84 (now in *Mesaionika*, I, 482–536).

[56] Hatzidakis, *Mesaionika*, I, 480–81.

own day.[57] Suffice it to say that by disproving Psycharis's theories on the historical development of Greek during the Middle Ages, Hatzidakis was able to discredit Psycharis's support for demotic as the proper written language of modern Greece.

It seems to me, however, that neither Psycharis nor Hatzidakis (let alone Korais) had a clear idea of medieval Greek as a synchronic system. For instance, Hatzidakis rejected all features found in medieval texts after the twelfth century that are not compatible with either the ancient or the modern language, claiming them to be 'the product of the ignorance and lack of aesthetic sense of the scribes of the time'. When words, forms and meanings found in medieval texts are not attested in either the ancient or the modern language, he accepted them only as long as they were in harmony with 'the general rules of Greek'.[58] Hatzidakis saw Greek as a continuous and seamless fabric in which each individual development was continued *ad infinitum*. In reality, however, the rules of the language have changed over time, and certain medieval developments did not survive into the modern language.[59] As for Psycharis, his obsession with the 'natural' coexistence of ancient and modern Greek in medieval times blinded him to the particular features of medieval grammar.[60] There is no doubt that Hatzidakis was the sounder linguist: his arguments are generally more reasonable, learned, accurate and convincing than those of Psycharis, whose discourse is more rhetorical, metaphorical and ideologically loaded and who was all too often carried away by his own belligerence. Yet I do not think that Psycharis's views should be rejected wholesale; I agree with him, for, instance, that the infinitive did not disappear from Greek as early as Hatzidakis claimed,[61] and Psycharis's view is supported by evidence from the (albeit limited) survival of the infinitive in the Pontic and Italic dialects today.[62]

[57] See, for instance, R. M. Dawkins, 'The Greek Language in the Byzantine Period', in N. H. Baynes and H. St. L. B. Moss (eds), *Byzantium. An Introduction to East Roman Civilization* (Oxford, 1948), 255, who explicitly sides with Hatzidakis; and S. Alexiou, in D. Solomos, *Poiimata kai peza* (1994), 522, who dismisses the basis on which Psycharis compiled his statistics.

[58] Hatzidakis, *Mesaionika*, I, 373 (*Einleitung*, 15).

[59] One of these is the 'temporal' or 'circumstantial' infinitive: see B. D. Joseph, *The Synchrony and Diachrony of the Balkan Infinitive* (Cambridge, 1983), 60–61.

[60] For example, the rules for the placement of object clitic pronouns: see P. Mackridge, 'An editorial problem in medieval Greek texts: the position of the object clitic pronoun in the Escorial Digenes Akrites', in N. M. Panayotakis (ed.), *Origini della letteratura neogreca: Atti del Secondo Congresso Internazionale 'Neograeca medii aevi' (Venezia, 7–10 Novembre 1991)* (Venice 1993), I, 325–42.

[61] Psichari, *Essais*, 223–4.

[62] See P. Mackridge, 'The medieval Greek infinitive in the light of modern dialectal evidence', in *ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝ. Studies in Honour of Robert Browning* (Venice, 1996), 191–204.

In this paper I have shown how medieval (though not exclusively Byzantine) Greek was used as a battleground for the Greek language controversy in the nineteenth century. From Korais's prejudice in favour of classical Greece and his contempt for Byzantium, to the ideological interest shown by Psycharis and Hatzidakis in the language of the Greek Middle Ages, the study of medieval Greek was always part of a wider agenda that attempted to prove a point that concerned the modern Greeks and their heritage. It is perhaps only in very recent years that scholars have concerned themselves with the study of the language of medieval Greek texts without subscribing to a hidden or overt ideological agenda and have viewed medieval Greek not simply as a mixture of features that belong to two quite distinct stages of Greek (ancient and modern), but as a stage of the Greek language in its own right and with its own rules.

As a postscript we may note the way that Palamas mobilizes the emperor Basil II in support of the demotic in his poem *The King's Flute* (1910) (on which see Anthony Hirst's paper in the present volume, Chapter 9). Addressing the 'grammarians, rhetoricians, philosophers' and after expressing his contempt for the 'ἄσοφη σοφία τοῦ διαβασμένου' ('witless wisdom of the learned'), Basil launches into a passionate speech in support of the spoken language of the common people.[63] Just as, at the end of *Askraios* (1903–4), Palamas had already depicted Hesiod expressing his admiration for the modern poet's language,[64] now, at a critical stage of the language controversy, he showed a glorious Byzantine emperor granting his seal of approval to the demotic. By 1910, on the eve of the Balkan Wars, Greek intellectual leaders could view the Byzantines as authorities on the Greek language on a par with the ancients.

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[63] K. Palamas, *Apanta* (n.d.), V, 125–6.

[64] Palamas, *Apanta*, III, 222.

6

Metamorphoseon permulti libri: Byzantine literature translated into modern Greek

*Panagiotis A. Agapitos**

Byzantine literature written in the so-called learned idiom has attracted the interest of Greek translators and publishers only in the twentieth century, and even so, with the exception of patristic literature, very few texts were translated before the 1970s. The past decade, however, has witnessed something of an explosion in this publishing sector. A thorough study of the matter would require full bibliographies and an analysis of relevant material in newspapers and journals, as well as an evaluative historical survey of translations since the eighteenth century. The present essay will, more modestly, attempt to describe and tentatively explain the phenomenon of this recent 'translation boom', placing it within the context of a growing involvement with Byzantium in Greece today.

The reappearance of Byzantium on the printed page is not restricted to texts in translation. A brief overview reveals that two further large sectors of publishing activities have contributed substantially to the interest of the broader reading public in Byzantine culture. The first is scholarship. While in previous decades scholarly work was published in scholarly journals or monograph series,[1] in the last twenty years scholarly publications have also passed into the hands of large publishing houses and cultural foundations. Notable here are the score and more of volumes published

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[1] I am thinking of such journals as *Vyzantina*, *Epetiris Etaireias Vyzantinon Spoudon*, *Vyzantiaka*, *Diptycha* and *Ellinika*, and monograph series like the *Vivliothiki Sofias N. Saripolou tis Philosofikis Scholis* (University of Athens) and the *Parartimata tis Epistimonikis Epetiridas tis Philosofikis Scholis* (University of Thessaloniki).

since 1992 by the Goulandris-Horn Foundation and based on lecture series given there.[2] The lecture series cover various aspects of Byzantium hitherto practically unknown to the broader public and have reached a wide readership.[3]

The other publication sector which has seen remarkable growth in recent years is the translation of scholarly books into modern Greek. Three established publishing houses (Cultural Foundation of the National Bank of Greece, Papadimas, Kardamitsa), and many others, have been issuing translations of English, French and German studies, ranging from scholarly handbooks to historical and philological monographs. Clearly, Greek readers want to inform themselves about Byzantium and seem no longer to be content with the few older publications circulating until recently and written mostly before 1960.[4] Why this should be the case is a question we will have to address below. Another not insignificant factor here is the existence of a good many courses on Byzantine history, literature and archaeology at several Greek universities and since 1992 at the University of Cyprus, with their set textbooks.

Obviously, Byzantine history and modern Greek historiography played a crucial role in the ideological formation of the Greek state in the nineteenth century.[5] At the same time, the image of Byzantium in modern Greece was also shaped by literary production: many Greek authors were inspired by Byzantine history. The existing output, which has so far not been systematically catalogued, covers most areas of literature: novels, shorter and longer poems, dramas in prose and verse, children's literature.[6] Greek authors have, implicitly or explicitly, used Byzantine texts as sources, though in most cases the original sources have been viewed through the eyes of modern

[2] The series opened programmatically with Hélène Ahrweiler's essay, 'Modernismos kai Vyzantio'.

[3] E.g. 'Aspects of Byzantine Society' (1991–92), 'Material, Natural, and Intellectual Environment in the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine World' (1992–93), 'The Formation of the Balkan States' (1992–93), 'The Patriarchal Centres of Orthodoxy' (1992–93), 'Byzantine Reality and Modern Greek Interpretations' (1993–94). See also the volume in the same series, edited by Chrysa A. Maltezou, *Oi perithoriakoi sto Vyzantio* (1993), which includes the papers delivered at a symposium on marginal groups in Byzantium which was funded by the Foundation.

[4] Historical surveys, such as those of K. Amantos, Y. Kordatos, F. Gregorovious, A. Vasiliev, or even K. Krumbacher's venerable *History of Byzantine Literature* in its Greek translation (1897–1900).

[5] E. Skopetea, *To 'protypo vasileio' kai i Megali Idea* (1988) and P. A. Agapitos, 'Byzantine literature and Greek philologists in the nineteenth century', *Classica et Medievalia*, 43 (1992), 231–60; see also the contributions by Alexis Politis, George Huxley and Paschalis M. Kitromilides in the present volume (Chapters 1, 2 and 3).

[6] For a brief overview see A. Panaretou, 'To Vyzantio sti Neoelliniki Logotechnia', *Vyzantinos Domos*, 1 (1987), 43–63.

historians.[7] As a working hypothesis, I propose to divide this literary engagement with Byzantium into two broad periods.

The first period runs to the late 1960s and is, with very few exceptions,[8] characterized by a purely Helladic and nationalist perspective. Byzantium appears as a mixture of radiant greatness and mournful decline, in many cases serving as the foil for depicting the birth of modern Hellenism.[9] Most texts adopt a straightforward Constantinopolitan aristocratic perspective or shift the action from Asia Minor to the Helladic centre in Central and Southern Greece.[10]

The second period starts around the late 1970s. Here the image of Byzantium appears less schematized. Authors interpret historical figures in a highly individual manner, create wholly fictional characters and episodes, and freely apply innovative narrative or poetic techniques.[11] It is remarkable that in the five years to 1996, ten new historical novels on Byzantium were published, eight by Greeks[12] and two in translation.[13] One of these novels, *Enas skoufos apo porfyra* by Maro Douka, essentially a biography of Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118), and discussed by Marianna Spanaki elsewhere in this volume (Chapter 10), has become a best-seller.

This intense activity has been matched by the appearance of Byzantine literature in translation. I would suggest that the division into two periods

[7] One interesting case is Penelope Delta's unfinished novel, *To gremisma* (1911–13): see M. Loukaki, *O Vasileios B' Voulgaroktonos kai i Penelopi Delta* (Athens, 1996) and the contribution by Marianna Spanaki in the present volume (Chapter 10).

[8] E.g. the poetry of Cavafy or Angelos Sikelianos's verse drama, *Christos Lyomenos i o Thanatos tou Digeni* (1947); on the latter see N. G. Deligiannaki, 'O Sikelianos kai i mesaioniki paradosi: *O Thanatos tou Digeni* kai to akritiko epos', *Palimpsiston*, 8 (1989), 125–49.

[9] E.g. A. Terzakis's play *Theofano* (1948) or A. Vlachos's novel *Oi teleftaioi galinotatoi* (1961).

[10] Palamas, *I Flogera tou Vasilia* (1910) or Th. Petsalis-Diomidis's play *Sti riza tou megalou dentrou* (1952). On Palamas and Cavafy see P. A. Agapitos, 'Byzantium in the poetry of Kostis Palamas and C.P. Cavafy', *Kampos*, 2 (1994) 1–20, and Anthony Hirst's contribution to the present volume (Chapter 9).

[11] I would single out M. Lymberaki's play *Zoi* (1985), K. Hatzitheoklitos's novel *Simeioseis metarrhythmiston* (1986) and the poetry of D. Kalokyris, one of the most sensitive readers of Byzantine literature: see his collections *Ta fantastika fougara* (1977) and *Chromata tou ygrou zoou* (1990). One may mention as a curiosity the 24, 700-verse epic *Digenis Akritas* by Th. Papathanasopoulos (1990), which engages in an antagonistic dialogue with Kazantzakis's *Odyssey*.

[12] P. Theodoridis, *To Theopaido* (1992); D. S. Papadopoulos, *Rafail Stavriotis: Ellin ek Pontou Trapezountios, proskynitis tou erotos kai thireftis tis gnosis* (1993) and *To 'Symposion' tou Platonos kai to thliveron telos tou Kosma tou Trapezountiou* (1996); Y. Karydis, *Apo to throno sto keli* (1994); I. Kapandai, *Pou pia kairos* (1995); Ch. Samouilidis, *Vyzantinos esperinos* (1996); A. Galanos, *Me to Stavro kai to xifos. Afigimatiko synaxari* (1996).

[13] L. Malerba, *To ygro pyr* (1991; originally Milan, 1990); V. Mutavcieva, *Ego, i Anna Komnini* (1996; originally Sofia, 1991). It is worth noting that the only European novel about Byzantium translated before 1990 was M. Waltari, *Ioannis Angelos* (Helsinki, 1952), published in 1954 as *O mavros angelos* and reissued in 1992.

proposed above applies to translations also. Up to the 1970s the few available translations were published in literary journals,[14] privately printed editions[15] and inaccessible publications.[16] The number of such publications was fairly restricted, though the lack of a bibliographical survey precludes certainty. At any rate, these translations did not cater to the interests of a broader reading public.

All this changed dramatically in 1988, when the prestigious Athenian publishing house Agra brought out a translation by Aloi Sideri of Procopius's *Secret History*. This was the first time that a Byzantine text in translation had been brought out by a publishing house devoted almost exclusively to contemporary literature, though Agra had published works by authors with a strong interest in Byzantium, such as N. G. Pentzikis, A. Kosmatopoulos and N. Triantafyllopoulos, and in 1987 a slim volume containing A. Kosmatopoulos's edition of the oration *On the Names of God* by Theodore II Laskaris (1254–58).

The finely printed Procopius volume, with Theodora and Justinian figuring on the front and back covers respectively in close-up bright colour reproductions from the San Vitale mosaics in Ravenna, stands in extreme contrast to the gloomy design and poor printing of older translations. This is, however, a volume which, despite a scholarly air, merely translates older material from, for example, H. B. Dewing's Loeb edition of 1935 and G. A. Williamson's Penguin translation of 1966, and reflects nothing of current Procopius scholarship – yet its attractive appearance and notoriety of content positively invite the browser to pick it up.

This *Secret History* was a success, and in 1991 Agra issued a two-volume translation of Anna Comnena's *Alexiad*, again by Aloi Sideri: a work perhaps best known to the modern Greek reader through Cavafy's poem 'Anna Comnena' (on which see Anthony Hirst's contribution to the present volume, Chapter 9).[17] Significantly, the page facing the title page now spoke of a series of 'Byzantine Texts'; and the translator this time included a four-page preface about her approach to the task of translating this work.

The *Alexiad* too was a success, and in 1993 Agra brought out Michael Psellos's *Chronographia*, again translated by Sideri, and once again with

[14] E.g. selected passages from Book VI of Psellos's *Chronography* published in the Thessalonian journal *Kochlias*, nos 2 and 7/8 (1946), jointly translated by Nikos Gabriel Pentzikis (whose 'Thessaloniki and Life' appears in the present volume – Chapter 14), T. Iatrou and Y. Kitsopoulos.

[15] E.g. Procopius's *Secret History* translated by D. A. Pitsouni (1973).

[16] E.g. Anna Comnena's *Alexiad* translated into *katharevousa* by an unknown hand and issued by the Publications Department of the Greek Army in 1971–72.

[17] It is instructive to compare this *Alexiad* with the new German translation (Cologne, 1996) by D. R. Reinsch, who is preparing, with A. Kambylis, the new critical edition for the *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*.

material incorporated from earlier publications (the French and Italian critical editions and the English translation).[18] For the first time, the publisher included a statement about its Byzantine texts series:

> Agra Editions, after Procopius' *Secret History* and Anna Comnena's *Alexiad*, now present Michael Psellos' *Chronography* in their handy, accessible but also scholarly series of Byzantine Chronographers. The editorial format chosen is to print only the translation of the text and not to burden the publication with the original. The idea is to offer once more these texts as contemporary reading and take them out of the framework of strictly scholarly publications, placed in the programme of a publishing house which prints the works of Andreas Embiricos, Nikos Kavvadias and N.G. Pentzikis, as well as books by R.L. Stevenson, Henry James and Junichiro Tanizaki.

This is evidently an ambitious publishing venture, something, as far as Byzantine literature in the learned idiom is concerned, unknown in Greece.[19] But with the growing interest in Byzantium, and the success of Agra's first two publications, another publishing house entered the game. About a year before the appearance of Agra's Psellos volume, the relatively new Athenian publishing house Agrostis launched a bilingual series entitled 'Texts of Byzantine Historiography'. The first volume to appear was the first part of Psellos's *Chronography*, translated by Vrasidas Karalis; the publisher's note is illuminating:

> Agrostis Editions hope that this series will help the Greek reader to discover a relatively marginalized but very important heritage, and, at the same time, to be captured by a world somewhat exotic but very familiar, which will broaden his historical consciousness.

Leaving aside for a moment this statement's content, this publishing venture has all the appearance of a scholarly project. The series is directed by accredited academics, the volume includes an original introduction with a final chapter on the translator's approach to his task, the publication is bilingual, offering a reprint of the Italian critical edition (1984) but without the apparatus. The tastefully designed cover by Alexandros Isaris, an established painter and book designer, with its dark blue background and the patina-covered glistening figure of a kneeling Byzantine magnate, stands in marked contrast to the bright colours of the Agra volumes.[20] The

[18] E. Renauld (Paris, 1926–28) and the collaborative work of S. Impellizeri, U. Criscuolo and S. Ronchey (Vicenza, 1984); both editions with translations *en face*; E. R. A. Sewter for Penguin (Harmondsworth, 1966).

[19] There have, of course, been larger publishing ventures for ancient Greek literature, such as the Zacharopoulos biligual texts (1930–50) or the Papyros series (1950–60). More recently Kaktos launched a huge programme of 2000 volumes, of which some 350 have appeared.

[20] A detail from a famous panel icon (*c.* 1363) depicting Christ Pantokrator and two donors, now in the Hermitage. It is worth noting that the fourteenth-century figure, dressed in typical

backflap of the front cover announces a further four volumes in preparation.[21]

The Agrostis Psellos appeared while the Agra Psellos was being typeset; it is surely to this venture that the blurb of the Agra Psellos responds. The explanation that the original text has been omitted in order to cater more to a literary readership is contrasted with Agrostis' history-orientated public. With the appearance of the second volume of the Agrostis Psellos in 1993 the Greek reading public had the unprecedented opportunity of choosing between two modern translations of the same work by a Byzantine author. This peculiar situation encapsulates most vividly the change between the first and second phases in the translation of Byzantine texts.

Up to 1995 Agrostis, now called Kanaki Editions, published four further volumes in their bilingual series of 'Byzantine Historiography',[22] with another eight in preparation, five of them new;[23] as with the Psellos, the original texts faithfully reproduce the available critical editions. In contrast to Agra's apparently stagnating programme, Kanaki Editions seem determined to pursue and expand their original plan, and in 1995 they launched a new series, 'Texts of Byzantine Literature'. The first volume issued was the *editio princeps* of Theodoros Metochites's oration *On Education* (*c.* 1305) by Ioannis D. Polemis.[24] What surprises the reader is that instead of having planned one series to encompass all kinds of Byzantine texts, Kanaki Editions have separated historiography from the rest of Byzantine literature, thus creating a division unknown to medieval readers, but according well with the ingrained notions of the Modern Greek public about the importance of Byzantine historiography and the supposed absence of other literary genres. As in the case of the *Secret History* translation mentioned above, there is a clear inconguity between medieval historical reality and the modern received image.

Finally, the Athenian publishing house Nea Synora (Livanis Editions) launched yet another translation series with the title 'Byzantine Authors'. In 1996 the first four books of Procopius's *History of the Wars*, translated by Periklis Rodakis, were released in four separate volumes, totalling more

attire of the time, with a mitre-like head cover and a robe, does not at all correspond to the eleventh-century aesthetic.

[21] An anthology of shorter works by Psellos, Kekaumenos's *Strategikon*, the *History* of Doukas, and the *History* of Leon Diakonos.

[22] Kekaumenos, *Strategikon*, the historical work of Genesios, the *Breviarium* of Patriarch Nikephoros, and the first volume of the *Chronography* of Zonaras.

[23] The *History* of Michael Attaleiates, the *Historical Material* of Nikephoros Bryennios, the *Capture of Thessaloniki* by Eustathius, the *History* of Georgios Akropolites, and the *Capture of Thessaloniki* by Ioannes Kaminiatis.

[24] This publication, while in the same format as the rest, is of radically greater value: the original text included is a proper critical edition of a hitherto unpublished work.

than 1200 pages, with text and translation, but not *en face*; financial considerations must have dictated this solution. Two further volumes of translations appeared in 1996: the twelfth-century novels *Hysmine and Hysminias* by Eustathios Makrembolites and *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* by Theodoros Prodromos, both of them prepared by Kostas Poulos, and eight new titles have been announced.[25]

It is worth quoting the editorial note to the Makrembolites translation:

> Further to our attempt to bring the Greek public into contact with the works of Greek literature of all periods, we proceed to the publication of the twelfth-century Byzantine novel *Hysmine and Hysminias*. It is an erotic novel distinguished for its narrative technique, the subtlety of its descriptions, the psychological analysis of dreams, and its eventful plot.
>
> This artistic creation–hitherto known only to a narrow circle of specialists–appears for the first time in a Modern Greek rendering. We believe that the reading public will appreciate this venture.

Indeed, the publication of the two Comnenian novels represents a radical departure from the picture seen so far. The two novels offer to the modern Greek reader an unexpected novelty, namely 'erotic' literature from Byzantium. On the back covers of both volumes passages of a highly erotic character have been printed in order to attract the reader's attention: the front covers reproduce details from paintings by Alma-Tadema. They obviously have nothing to do with Byzantium, but they create the necessary, even if fictitious, exotic and erotic atmosphere of late Hellenism to lure the reader, while giving the impression of an *édition d'art*.[26] However, once the books are opened, the mediocre quality of the printing and the bad black-and-white reproductions of further nineteenth-century erotic paintings completely deflate the initial picture.[27] This is yet another incongruity.

So much then by way of a survey of the relevant publications. But what about the quality of the translations themselves? I shall have to confine myself here to a brief discussion of three cases where the translators have taken the trouble to expound their approaches to their respective tasks. These are the Prodromos translation by Kostas Poulos and the Psellos

[25] Surprisingly, three are identical to those announced by the Kanaki programme (Nikephoros Bryennios, Doukas, Georgios Akropolites). The remaining titles are the remaining four books of Procopius's *History of the Wars*, Nikephoros Gregoras's *Roman History*, the *Chronography* of John Malalas, the anonymous *Syntipas*, and the *History* of Kritoboulos.

[26] It may be noted, first, that Nea Synora publishes a large amount of erotica from eighteenth-century novels to contemporary comics; and, second, that the ancient novel has seen a revival of interest in recent years, through the translations of Achilles Tatius by G. Giatromanolakis (1990) and of Chariton by V. Lentakis (1995).

[27] It is indicative that in the books the paintings are unidentified, though Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema has had a sex change to 'Alma Tadema'.

translations by Vrasidas Karalis and Aloi Sideri. The Prodromos is unique in being the only verse text among all the published translations. The translator gives in his epilogue an explanation of why he has chosen to use prose:

> In the present rendering into Modern Greek prose a conscious attempt has been made to relieve the Byzantine poetic text from the intensely high-flown elevations of a multitude of rhetorical tropes and figures, whose faithful rendering would unjustly compromise the original in the eyes of the modern reader. A characteristic example of such a rhetorically overcharged passage – without this judgment's necessarily having an evaluative character – is Rhodanthe's lament ... By contrast, wherever tradition makes its presence more strongly felt, as for example in the *ekphrasis* of Rhodanthe, the discourse appears rough, with an obvious parodic intent. The attempt to make this discourse correspond to Modern Greek modes of phrasing requires some moderating interventions, but always guided by compatibility with the linguistic and aesthetic criteria of the modern reader.[28]

This is the easy way out for a translator who has not made the effort to understand the rules of Byzantine rhetoric and to reproduce them in modern discourse. It is also the attitude of one who fails to keep faith with the text he works with. The result is a flat and tedious text, precisely because all those elements making the original function as literature for a Byzantine readership have been removed, leaving the modern reader with the outlines of a schematic and slow-paced plot. The translation, instead of transforming Prodromos's novel 'into a new body', as Ovid would have it, deforms the work into an empty frame.[29]

In the case of the *Chronographia* we have the chance to compare, on the basis of a single text, two divergent theories and practices of translation. Vrasidas Karalis devotes four pages at the end of his introduction to the issue of translation:

> I have translated the *Chronographia* faithful to the spirit rather than to the letter of its author. Translators into other languages have the luxury to translate the text to different structures of expression and traditions. The relation between Ancient and Modern Greek is wholly different. The two expressional structures overlap, in many cases are indeed exactly the same, to the point that the translator may simply abandon the text to itself. Language speaks of its own with a rhythm leading to the comprehension of its meaning ... The fact must not escape us that Psellos borrows verbal expressions from every period of the Greek language without shame, maybe even without discretion.

[28] Theodoros Prodromos, *Rodanthi kai Dosiklis* (tr. K. Poulos, 1996), 177–9.

[29] The reader may compare with profit the passages from *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* (II.120–28, III.1–52 = Poulos pp. 35, 47–8) which appear in I. Anagnostakis (ed.), *O oinos stin poiisi. Tomos B': Oinos o Vyzantinos* (1995; part 2, 62–5). Anagnostakis effortlessly retains the rhetorical discourse and renders it in verse, using the modern eleven-syllable verse, which is very close in its rhythmical patterns to the Byzantine iambic or 'accentual dodecasyllable'.

> There is no typological uniformity in his text: if he desires a Homeric word, he introduces it without hesitation; if he likes a popular expression, he inserts it without qualms. What appears to us today a monument of linguistic stability is a palimpsest of loans, patches of expression joined together according the mood of the moment, a linguistic timelessness.
>
> The translator, therefore, must take the text's linguistic disorder into consideration and proceed with corresponding choices, if he wishes to stay close to the original's spirit. The best counsellor in this is undoubtedly C. P. Cavafy with his lack of expressive homogeneity and his gradual discovery of the oral discourse of his times.... Thus, many of the translation's choices are based on the paradigm of the great Alexandrian and the particular idiom he introduced, whose possibilities have not been fully exhausted or explored even in our day.
>
> Further assistance came from Giorgos Ioannou. The smoothness of his urban dialect is, I think, the best medium in rendering a sensitivity which suffers from a melancholy yearning (*kaïmos*) and which purifies itself through discourse. The translation of Strato's *Musa Puerilis* and the successful incorporation into Modern Greek of Ancient Greek phrases which sound like proverbs, has furnished the artistic precedence to retain certain self-same phrases which can be wonderfully acclimatized in the style of our everyday discourse.[30]

The above excerpt allows for some conclusions about Psellos's transformation into modern Greek.[31] The achronic intertextuality and the mixture between a learned and a colloquial discourse, which the translator discerns in the *Chronographia*, is paralleled with Cavafy's poetry, while Psellos's discursive sensibility is paralleled with the prose of Ioannou. Thus, two authoritative but highly individual models in poetry and prose respectively are invoked to vindicate the translator's preferences. Moreover, Karalis has borrowed from Ioannou's translation of Book XII of the *Greek Anthology* the device of using verbatim phrases of the original in his text.[32] The result looks like this (*Chron.* VI.28 = Karalis I, pp. 345–7):

> Προσωπικά, θὰ ἐπιθυμοῦσα, ἂν ὄχι σὲ ὁποιονδήποτε ἄλλον τουλάχιστον σὲ αὐτὸν τὸν ἀγαπημένο μου αὐτοκράτορα, νὰ μὴν προσαπτόταν καμία ἀπολύτως μομφή· ὅμως *οὐχὶ κατὰ τὰς ἡμεδαπὰς αἱρέσεις αἱ τῶν πραγμάτων ἀκολουθίαι*. Γιὰ ὅλα αὐτὰ δεῖξε μου ἔλεος, ὑπερτέλεια ψυχή. Συγχώρα με, ἂν μιλῶ γιὰ τὸν καιρὸ τῆς βασιλείας σου χωρὶς νὰ μετριάσω, χωρὶς νὰ

[30] Michael Psellos, *Chronographia*, vol. 1, tr. V. Karalis (1992), 31–3.

[31] Yet Karalis's acknowledgement of his debt to Silvia Ronchey's translation raise doubts about his own capacities, given that Ronchey has based herself on Sewter's English version: see the review by R. Anastasi, *Orpheus*, 7 (1986), 432–8.

[32] *Palatini Anthologia. Stratonos Mousa Paidiki*, tr. G. Ioannou (1979). On p. 13 Ioannou explains his decision to leave in the translation these 'worn-off scraps' of ancient phrases, which he compares to the old stones looking through the walls of restored buildings, and which entice and delight the reader. Nowhere does Ioannou speak of these phrases as having a proverbial ring.

> κρύψω τίποτε, χωρὶς νὰ λέω ψέματα – συγχώρα με γι' αὐτό. Ὅπως δὲν θὰ ἀποκρύψω καμιὰ ἀπὸ τὶς τρισεύγενες πράξεις σου, ἀλλὰ θὰ τὶς κάνω νὰ λάμπουν κάτω ἀπὸ τὸ φῶς, ἔτσι, ἀκόμα καὶ ὅ,τι δὲν εἶχε τὸν ἴδιο χαρακτῆρα μὲ αὐτές, καὶ αὐτό, χωρὶς περιφράσεις, θὰ τὸ ἀποκαλύψω στὴν ἀφήγησή μου. Σχετικὰ μ' ἐκεῖνον, λοιπὸν εἶναι ἀρκετὰ αὐτὰ ποὺ εἶπα.[33]

The paragraph's penultimate sentence is in its second part incomprehensible, while the obvious Cavafian repetition of χωρίς (derived from 'Τείχη') does not in the least correspond to the original (κἂν μὴ μετρίως περὶ τῶν χρόνων εἴποιμι, ἀλλ' ἀνεπικαλύπτως καὶ ἀληθῶς). The verbatim quotation not only has nothing to do with contemporary Greek oral discourse, but is also quite misleading. The three nouns αἱρέσεις, πράγματα and ἀκολουθίαι carry different meanings for the modern reader, who thinks rather of 'heresies', 'things' and 'sequences', while Psellos specifically meant 'choices', 'situations' and 'developments'. Here we detect the most dangerous aspect of Karalis's ideas about translating Byzantine literature into modern Greek. Far from making translation easier, the similarity of words is the most difficult trap to avoid, exactly because medieval discourse differs radically as to its ideological, political, social and literary context from its twentieth-century equivalent.

This very ideological construct figures prominently also in Sideri's preface to her translation of the *Chronographia*.[34] She too discerns the polyphonic discourse of Psellos and his protean rhetorical skills, holds that the Greek translator has a great advantage over his other European colleagues, and believes that certain phrases can be incorporated wholesale into the translated text. Her preface ends with the following paragraph:

> The translation cannot but stand but on a razor's edge: away from learned pedantry which would lead to an unhistorical and therefore false language, away from contemporary and topical elements which would constitute dangerous leaps into the present. With all due respect to the vocabulary and the conventions of Modern Greek, the text must primarily convey the translation of an ancient work. Moreover, and especially when an author is involved for whom style was a primary concern and a great pride, the translation must remain faithful to the letter of the text. Thus, in most cases, the spirit is also preserved.

[33] The passage is from Psellos's excursus at the beginning of Book VI about his approach to the writing of the *Chronography*. Psellos has just distinguished between (a) the orations he wrote for Konstantinos Monomachos, which, in accordance with the rules of the genre, were of a purely encomiastic character, and (b) the present discourse, which must of necessity include the strictures of the objective historian. For this he apologizes to his dead patron.

[34] *Chronographia tou Michail Psellou*, tr. A. Sideri (1993), 54–6; see also her preface to the *Alexiad* translation, 9–12.

Sideri is manifestly responding to Karalis's opening statement about the spirit and the letter of a text and his 'topical' mixture of discourses. Let us look at the result in the same passage (*Chron.* VI.28 = Sideri, p. 205):

> Ἐπιθυμία μου θὰ ἦταν, ἂν ὄχι γιὰ ὁποιονδήποτε ἄλλον, τουλάχιστον γιὰ κεῖνον τὸν τόσο ἀγαπητό μου αὐτοκράτορα, νὰ δώσω αὐτὸ τὸ δεῖγμα εὐγνωμοσύνης· τὰ πράγματα ὅμως δὲν ἔρχονται ὅπως ἐμεῖς ἐπιθυμοῦμε· γι ' αὐτὸ ζητῶ τὴ συγγνώμη σου, ἁγία ψυχή· ἂν μοῦ συμβεῖ νὰ μιλήσω γιὰ τὰ χρόνια της βασιλείας σου χωρὶς περιορισμούς, ἀλλὰ ἀπροκάλυπτα καὶ εἰλικρινά, συγχώρησέ μου το. Γιατὶ ὅπως δὲν θὰ κρύψω καμιὰ ἀπὸ τὶς καλές σου πράξεις ἀλλὰ θὰ τὶς φέρω ὅλες στὸ φως, ἔτσι καί, ἂν ὑπάρχει κάτι ὄχι τόσο ἀξιέπαινο, κι αὐτὸ ἐπίσης θὰ τὸ διηγηθῶ. Αὐτὰ εἶχα νὰ πῶ σὲ κεῖνον.

The passage is readable and easy to understand. But a comparison with Karalis's translation reveals three clear differences in meaning and numerous differences in style, with Sideri's translation being less faulty.[35] Yet a detailed comparison with the respective passages in the French, English and Italian translations[36] shows that Karalis basically follows the French translation, while Sideri adheres more closely to the English translation. The high-flown pronouncements of both translators about their task prove on closer examination rather unsubstantiated. In fact, a careful reading of their texts reveals a lack of accuracy as to the Greek and an absence of control over Byzantine prose, both results of unfamiliarity and hasty execution. These are major flaws for a translation, obscured for the average reader as they may be by a polished and impressive style. The other translations, too, even if for different reasons and in varying degrees, display similar faults. This situation represents the last aspect of the incongruity pointed out earlier, now an incongruity between the intended purpose and what is ultimately provided.

At least two reasons for all this incongruous and uneven productivity can be gleaned from the translations' prefaces and editorial notes. The publishers wish to promote the readership's acquaintance with Greek literature and to increase their historical awareness of Greek history as a whole. The translations serve either as sources of Byzantine (*qua* Medieval Greek) political and cultural history or as works of literary quality. In some cases, as with Psellos's *Chronographia*, the two purposes are combined. At the same time, the appearance of historical novels (on which see Marianna Spanaki's contribution to the present volume, Chapter 10) equally caters to an increased aspiration to historical awareness, but through the medium of

[35] (i) νὰ μὴν προσαπτόταν καμία ἀπολύτως μομφή (Karalis) = νὰ δώσω αὐτὸ τὸ δεῖγμα εὐγνωμοσύνης (Sideri); (ii) ὑπερτέλεια = ἁγία; (iii) σχετικὰ μ' ἐκεῖνον = μὲ κεῖνον.

[36] Renauld, 1.131–2; Sewter, 169–70; Impellizeri et al., 275–7.

original literary works. The large number of publications in both sectors is the best indication that the Greek reading public has responded positively.

Why? Greek society has undergone major changes in all aspects of public and private life since 1974. The involvement of intellectuals and littérateurs with redefining the recent past has contributed substantially to the discussions concerning modern Greek political and cultural identity. The Balkan crisis of the 1990s and the often tense relationship of Greece with its neighbours, Turkey in particular, have further contributed to the exploration of this identity, be it in political debates or in the area of the arts, a process found in other countries of the Balkan peninsula as well. Greece has been uncovering the many traumatic and divisive experiences of the past and, at the same time, has been trying to reclaim a sense of national pride and unity. In particular, the sense of unity in history, art and literature governs to a great extent the collective choices of Greek society.

Yet this sense of unity is not to be identified with its earlier manifestations. Byzantium is a case in point. In the historical novels of the 1990s we find a marked preference for 'peripheral' themes: Macedonia, Thrace and Pontus figure prominently or even exclusively as areas of action, thus delineating the backdrop to the political situation of the present. Other novels concentrate on new subjects, such as hagiography and philosophy, which reflect the recent interest in a politically and culturally defined relation of Orthodoxy and Hellenism.

This varied picture, a blend of regionalism and eclecticism, is in its own way reflected in the translations of Byzantine literature. The choice of texts translated or to be translated covers the time from the sixth to the fifteenth centuries. Though most texts come from the genre of historiography, even there the selection moves between authors with different social, political and educational backgrounds. Moreover, the presence of philosophical, rhetorical and poetic texts brings further colour to the picture. It appears, then, as if the once monolithic Byzantium reveals, as Nonnus would have phrased it, its ποικίλον εἶδος to the modern Greek public in a process of many transformations through the material presence of many books. But, as with all transformations, there can never be absolute certainty at which point one might catch a glimpse of the true image, if such an image should exist at all.

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7

'As *Byzantine* then as it is today': *Pope Joan* and Roïdis's Greece

Ruth Macrides

Pope Joan, everyone would agree, is an extraordinary novel. Published in 1866 by the thirty-year-old Emmanouil Roïdis, it was a *hapax* for its author and for Greek literature. Coming as it did at the high point of the Greek reception of Western historical novels, which was accompanied by the slogan 'the pleasing and the beneficial', *Pope Joan* gave pleasure and was beneficial in surprising and unexpected ways.[1] At a time when Byzantium was being discovered and promoted by Zambelios as the link in the chain connecting ancient with modern Greece,[2] and when Paparrigopoulos was introducing Byzantine history into his lectures at the University of Athens, Roïdis set his novel in the medieval West and told the story, not of knights and chivalrous deeds, but of monks and illicit affairs.[3] While Romanticism had as its bywords inspiration, unity and originality, *Pope Joan* made a show of its research, its fragmentation, its derivativeness. When literature was meant to serve the exigencies of the national cause, supporting and nourishing it, *Pope Joan* unsettled and created doubt.

Roïdis set his novel in the distant past, the ninth-century West, in a world so medieval that it was entirely ecclesiastical, a world populated exclusively by monks. This period was one scarcely known to the Greek reading public, which had begun reading historical novels in the 1850s, when in England the genre was already in decline. The preference in Greece was for French novels, although as early as 1832 Scott was acknowledged as the 'father of

[1] S. Denisi, *To elliniko istoriko mythistorima kai o Sir Walter Scott (1830–1880)* (1994), 17–61.

[2] S. Zambelios, *Vyzantinai meletai* (1857), 26; see M. Herzfeld, *Ours Once More* (New York, 1990), 39–40 and George Huxley's contribution to the present volume (Chapter 2).

[3] T. Kiousopoulou, 'I proti edra vyzantinis istorias sto panepistimio Athinon', *Mnimon*, 15 (1993), 263, and Paschalis M. Kitromilides's contribution to the present volume (Chapter 3).

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the historical novel'. His works were, however, translated into Greek relatively late – *Ivanhoe* in 1847, twenty-seven years after its first publication – and of the ninety published translations of the 1850s not one was a Scott novel. In the 1860s three of his works were published in Greek and by 1880, according to Roïdis, eleven sets of Scott's collected works were to be found in the National Library in Athens. Many other important books had to be transferred to storage to make room for 'the endless *Valterskotoi*'.[4]

Scott's twenty-six novels between 1814 and 1832 covered a wide chronological period, from the First Crusade in the late eleventh century to the early nineteenth century, and were set mainly in Scotland or England. Yet *Ivanhoe* was certainly the most popular of Scott's books in Greece, if one goes by the number of copies in the libraries of Athens; and it is *Ivanhoe* that Roïdis singles out as the novel which made the end of the Middle Ages, and especially the England of the knights, known to the reading public.[5] A more unusual setting, however, and an earlier medieval period were handled by Scott in his 1831 novel, *Count Robert of Paris*, set in Constantinople at the time of the First Crusade, in the reign of Alexios I Komnenos. It does not appear to have been well known in Greece and was never translated there. In his notes at the bottom of the page and at the end of the book, Scott shows his indebtedness to Gibbon for his picture of Comnenian Constantinople. He had also read Villehardouin, the later crusader, for his description of the city, and Anna Comnena on Sichelgaïta, the wife of the Norman Robert Guiscard.[6] *Count Robert* is very much a westerner's view of Byzantium and, as a contemporary of Roïdis, a Scottish lord, remarked,' it might have been written by a crusader ... probably it was, in the sense that it was from that quarter that he derived his ideas of Constantinople'. For Lord Bute, as for other readers of historical novels, their chief benefit was that they acquainted their readers with events and names and made them curious to learn more in more accurate detail. This was true of his daughter, who had been amused by the Greek names and characters in the book. 'It has at least had the good effect of making her ask for the *Alexias* of Anna Komnena which I have accordingly sent for for her', Lord Bute wrote in a letter to his Greek friend, Dimitrios Vikelas, himself the author of an historical novel.[7]

Lord Bute's young daughter was unusual in going beyond the historical novel to consult the contemporary source: most readers of historical novels got their knowledge of history straight from the novel itself. Indeed, in 1863

[4] Denisi, *To elliniko istoriko mythistorima*, 60 (and 17–99 more generally).

[5] Ibid., 51–2, 60.

[6] Sir Walter Scott, *Count Robert of Paris* (1831), 507–9.

[7] Letters of Lord Bute to Dimitrios Vikelas, 19 October 1886, 28 February 1887: National Library, Athens; cited in R. J. Macrides, *The Scottish Connection in Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, St John's House Papers, 4 (St Andrews, 1992), 10.

Skarlatos Vyzantios asserted that Macaulay had in vain poured out his knowledge in historical monographs: 'However many important histories are written, ancestral history will never become common knowledge ... if truth is not covered with the mask of myth.' English history, in his opinion, would not have become known at all, 'if the magical writing of Walter Scott had not made truth beloved and if he had not mixed, so to speak, a small dose of history with a comparable dose of myth'.[8] For Scott this mixture consisted of a fictional hero, an outsider to a place, which gave him the opportunity to describe its customs. In depicting historical personages briefly introduced into the novel, Scott was very careful, he tells us, to base the depictions on documents no one could deny. He criticized his imitators for reading old books and archival material as they wrote, holding that he wrote *after* having read historical sources, retaining them in his memory, and not returning to the sources for every piece of information. Scott thought his works more natural, while his imitators' novels 'drowned' in detailed description; in his view, they stole very obviously from historical sources, while he tried not to let his sources be easily detected.[9]

One of these imitators, Bulwer-Lytton, was head of a small group of writers who flourished in the 1830s and 1840s and chose for themselves the title 'historical novelist'. They emphasized the historical side of the genre over the fictional: the historical novel, in their hands, became the means of explaining a historical period from the viewpoint of the historian, not the novelist. According to Bulwer-Lytton, there were two ways of composing a historical novel: by lending additional interest through historical events to idealized persons and an imaginary story, or by drawing the main interest of the narrative from history itself. The first was Scott's method; the second his own. Bulwer-Lytton filled his historical novels with great chunks of historical texts and included footnotes which gave all the versions of the historical event narrated; he included detailed descriptions of realia: dress, armour, food and customs, including the rare terms in use in the period in which the novels took place.[10]

The earliest Greek novels appear to be a mixture of the two models of writing which Bulwer-Lytton identified. The first Greek historical novel, *The Lord of the Morea* by Alexandros Rizos Rangavis (1850), is a hybrid of *Ivanhoe* and the *Chronicle of the Morea*, a fourteenth-century account of the Frankish Morea from the conqueror's point of view. The notes to the *Lord of the Morea* show that Rangavis knew the 1841 and 1845 editions of the

[8] Denisi, *To elliniko istoriko mythistorima*, 49–50.

[9] Ibid., 108–13.

[10] Ibid., 130–32; see J. C. Simmons, *The Novelist as Historian. Essays on the Victorian Historical Novel* (The Hague, 1973), 8–62; H. Orel, *The Historical Novel from Scott to Sabatini: Changing Attitudes towards a Literary Genre, 1814–1920* (New York, 1995), 15–41.

Chronicle and the secondary sources on the period. In her book on the Greek historical novel, Sofia Denisi argues that Rangavis had also absorbed important elements from *Ivanhoe*, in particular his scepticism towards the ideal of knighthood.[11] But although *The Lord of the Morea* was the first historical novel to appear in Greece, it was not nearly as successful as Stefanos Xenos's *Heroine of Greek Independence* (1861). For this Xenos used a huge number of sources, primary and secondary, including oral witnesses, but he also used the narrative technique of Scott, creating characters whom he placed among the historical personages of the War of Independence. The overall effect, however, is the same as that of Bulwer-Lytton's novels – a piling on of information which overwhelms the reader.[12]

Against this background comes *Pope Joan*, which Roïdis ostensibly presents as a work of research: a 'medieval study', as the title page calls it, a 'narrative encyclopaedia of the middle ages', as it is described in the preface.[13] *Pope Joan* comes with all the apparatus of scholarship: a preface addressed to his readers and critics, setting out what the author hopes to accomplish; a detailed introduction presenting the case for the existence of a female pope; a text with footnotes; and a body of notes at the end of the text.[14] The author insists that his is a true story, and, like a work of history, his preface begins with a justification of his account. Roïdis places himself in the tradition of historical writing by quoting Herodotus and later writers who began their works with just such a statement of their reasons for writing history (63); further, he expresses a respect for the reading public evinced by an attention to historical accuracy. Roïdis claims to draw on a medieval source for every detail of his work and insists on the precision of his representations of cities, buildings, clothes, food, and so on: 'Every description ... is exact, even in its smallest detail, as can be seen in part from the notes at the end of the work, which I can easily multiply' and 'I refer to all this not in a display of my polymathy but simply to show how much I respect the public' (70–71).

Not only are aspects of everyday life drawn from medieval sources. Roïdis would have us believe that the central character, his heroine, is a real historical personage. In his introduction he provides a long and detailed account of the sources which mention Joan and discuss her authenticity, from the eleventh century to the seventeenth. 'I thought it good, so that I not appear

[11] Denisi, *To elliniko istoriko mythistorima*, 205–26.

[12] Ibid., 229–52.

[13] All references in my text are to the edition by Alkis Angelou: Emmanouil Roïdis, *I Papissa Ioanna* (1993), here to p. 69.

[14] Editions and translations of *Pope Joan* rarely reproduce the text in full and are therefore misleading; Angelou's is an exception. On this point, see R. Macrides, 'The fabrication of the Middle Ages: Roïdis's *Pope Joan*', *Kampos: Cambridge Papers in Modern Greek*, 4 (1996), 31, n. 8.

to be making this up, to compose as an introduction, a summary of the most authentic witnesses on which this narrative is based' (78–9). His summary of the scholarship on the subject appears to be thorough, although he claims that he has had to be selective because there are over five hundred references to this pope (90–91). If we take the entry on Pope Joan in the appendix to the *Oxford Dictionary of Popes* and compare the information given there with Roïdis's introduction, the following similarities and divergences are evident:[15]

1. *ODP*: 'The tradition that there had been a female pope at some date in the ninth, tenth, or eleventh century was almost universally accepted from the mid-thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries.' Roïdis refers only to sources which place Joan in the ninth century, and he gives as his earliest source Anastasius the Librarian, a ninth-century writer; he otherwise quotes sources only of the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. He admits, however, that later scholars say that the passage in Anastasius is an interpolation.[16]
2. *ODP*: 'The story first appears between 1240 and 1250 in the *Universal Chronicle of Metz* attributed to the Dominican Jean de Mailly, according to which Victor III (d. 1087) was succeeded by a talented woman ...' Roïdis does not mention this source at all, which makes Joan an eleventh-century pope, but rather that of the later thirteenth-century Dominican Martin of Troppau or Martin Polonus, who gave the story its definitive form, placed Joan in the ninth century, and from whose account the main lines of Roïdis's version of the story are taken.[17] The entry in Martin's *Chronicle of Popes and Emperors* reads:

> After ... Leo, John Anglicus, born at Mainz, was pope for two years, seven months and four days, and died in Rome, after which there was a vacancy in the papacy of a month. It is claimed that this John was a woman who as a girl had been led to Athens dressed in the clothes of a man by a certain lover of hers. There she became proficient in a diversity of branches of knowledge, until she had no equal, and afterwards in Rome, she taught the liberal arts and had great masters among her students and audience. A high opinion of her life and learning arose in the city, and she was the choice of all for pope. While pope, however, she became pregnant by her companion. Through ignorance of the exact time when the birth was expected, she was delivered of a child while in procession from St Peter's to the Lateran, in a narrow lane between the Coliseum and St Clement's church. After her death, it is said she was buried in that same place. The Lord Pope always turns aside from the street

[15] J. N. D. Kelly, *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes* (Oxford, 1986), 329–30.

[16] Roïdis, *Papissa*, 95–6. For an English translation, see C. H. Collette, *Pope Joan (The Female Pope): An Historical Study* (1886), 21–102.

[17] Roïdis, *Papissa*, 97–8; also R. and D. Pardoe, *The Female Pope* (Wellingborough, 1988), 1–23, 86–8.

> and it is believed by many that this is done because of abhorrence of the event. [18]

3. Finally, the *ODP* tells us that 'the story was accepted in Catholic circles for centuries. It was taken up by humanists like Petrarch and influenced iconography, for Joan figures among the busts of popes placed *c.*1400 in Siena Cathedral. Catholic criticism became increasingly vocal from the mid-sixteenth century and the legend was effectively demolished by a Frenchman, David Blondel, in the mid-seventeenth century.' All this information is also in Roïdis (89, 99–104), who concludes:

> As for me, I am inwardly convinced of her existence. I tried to convey my conviction to the reader through events and exact references showing that, a) if one takes into account the condition and the affairs of people then, there is nothing unbelievable about Joan and, b) the evidence for these things is given by writers and monuments whose authority only the blind or the wilfully blind can deny (113).

Roïdis thus sets up expectations in his readers of a historically documented story: a central character, a heroine, for whose existence he discusses the evidence, details of everyday life based on contemporary sources, footnotes and endnotes with explanations, clarifications and documentation. Only the blind, he claims, could deny the authority of his sources. At the same time he sets out to blind his readers with his scholarly apparatus, sprinkling his text and notes with statements which make us have second thoughts about his evidence and his presentation of it. We find disturbing, confusing comments, and from the very start Roïdis informs us: 'The small number of ecclesiastical writers in the library of our university and the loss of most of my notes from elsewhere, have adequately limited this part of my work' (79).

What is Roïdis up to? He gives conflicting messages and suppresses evidence, omitting to mention, for example, that Blondel was a Protestant.[19] He further undermines the value and weight of his scholarly armoury when he contrasts the evidence of 'serious men', amazing in their polymathy, with the 'babblings of fools'. But it turns out that those who are praised as 'serious men' are those who present the criticisms of the case for a female pope, while those who are denounced as fools range from 'trustworthy' chroniclers to hagiographers and are writers on whom Roïdis has based his account (89–90).

Roïdis ostensibly gives his readers what they expect: a historical novel which is more history than myth, accuracy in detail, a wealth of documentation;

[18] *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores* (ed. G. H. Pertz, Hanover, 1872), 22.428; Pardoe, *The Female Pope*, 11.

[19] Ibid., 72–3.

in short, fact rather than fiction. At the same time, however, he shatters his readers' expectations by surprising, confusing, misleading, making abrupt volte-faces. In his hands, fact and fiction become indistinguishable, even if he has managed to fool some into believing that he believed in the authenticity of Pope Joan.[20]

The medieval world of *Pope Joan* is not a world into which the reader can become absorbed, for Roïdis recreates less the Middle Ages than a reference library.[21] He never lets his readers forget that they are reading, and that he is a writer and indeed a reader. He does this in several ways, most directly and obviously by making frequent appeals to the reader, and by addressing male and female readers separately.[22] Further, Roïdis is constantly reminding his readers of himself, most simply by alluding to his pen (138, 180, etc.), but also by referring to the processes by which the words that they are reading have reached their eyes.[23] He explains that he has refrained from spending time on researching the name of Joan's father, work which would have necessitated the collation of manuscripts:

> I doubt whether the public would repay me for this effort. Therefore, taking my cue from the men of letters of today who are afraid that if they waste time reading they might write less and thus deprive their contemporaries and posterity, I continue, or rather begin, my story. (115)

By pointing out what he has not done, Roïdis draws even more attention to what he is doing.

Furthermore, Roïdis's is a story made up of other people's stories, and it matters little whether the other writers are medieval or contemporary, chroniclers, hagiographers, the authors of the New Testament or of historical romances. His work is a pastiche, and he revels in its derivativeness and fragmentation. His narrative – which does anything but flow – is a meeting place for other texts. From the text of the narrative we are sometimes referred to footnotes, from which we are redirected to the introduction or to the body of notes at the end. There we learn that Roïdis has taken whole sentences and descriptions from others' texts.[24] He sometimes re-uses his own words, as when he repeats in the body of the narrative sentences which can be found in his introduction or elsewhere in the narrative (74 and 191; 159 and 195). Even his characters speak and write other people's words (147,

[20] See Collette, *Pope Joan*, 6–7; L. Durrell, *Pope Joan* (1954), 10; Pardoe, *The Female Pope*, 74.

[21] M. Kakavoulia, '*Papissa Ioanna*: polytopo palimpsisto', *Chartis*, 15 (April 1985), 294–312.

[22] D. Tziovas, '*I Papissa Ioanna* kai o rolos tou anagnosti', *Chartis*, 15, 427–42; repr. in Tziovas, *Meta tin aisthitiki* (1987), 259–82.

[23] See Macrides, 'The fabrication of the Middle Ages', 32–3.

[24] Kakavoulia, '*Papissa*', 299–301.

151).[25] Writing is stitching together words that someone else has already written. Is *Pope Joan* in fact a parody of medieval writing?

Roïdis shatters the illusion of a recreated medieval world also by surprising and startling his readers with incongruous and unexpected comparisons. The comparisons are shockingly irreverent, such as the description of the nuns at Arles: 'Among these brides of Jesus there were, as in the harem of the sultan, virgins of every ethnic type and colour' (179). They are equally comical: on reading Basil of Caesarea's treatise on virginity, brother Corvinus, who had been castrated, found the solution to his problem: 'Archimedes, ecstatic with joy, cried,"Eureka!" after the solution of the problem but the monk ran about the cloisters of the monastery shouting loudly, "I can after all!" ' (165).

Most often Roïdis inserts comparisons taken from contemporary life. He makes frequent references to England, a topical subject in literary magazines and the romantic literature of his time.[26] In describing Joan's mother before she gave birth to Joan, Roïdis explains, 'Jutta rolled from the bed of her master into the arms of the monk, as today in England top hats roll from the temples of a diplomat onto the head of a beggar' (115). The insertions also relate to aspects of contemporary Greece and to individual Greeks. Frumentius, having dressed Joan as a monk, knelt in admiration before brother 'John' and began, in ecstasy, to praise his beauty with hymns 'with which monks of the middle ages used to extol one by one the limbs of the Virgin, her hairs, cheeks, breasts, belly, legs and feet, as horse-dealers the beauty of their horses and Mr. P. Soutsos that of his heroines' (154–5).

Every aspect of contemporary life and literature is open to Roïdis's encyclopaedic attention. Fashions in medicine, philosophy, literature and female deportment are ridiculed by means of incongruous juxtapositions and the mixing of categories. These methods remove readers from the Middle Ages, from the literary fiction they seek, and give them the truth Roïdis has promised them.[27] His truth is not an abstraction but a physical reality: 'The truth naked and unkempt, as she came out of the well' (146). Roïdis offers no nostalgic revival of the medieval past.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the pages which he devotes to Joan's visit to Athens. Martin Polonus's version of the story of Joan included a visit to Athens, where Joan had a brilliant student career before settling in Rome. Roïdis's story presents Joan and her monk-lover Frumentius arriving in Athens on the first Sunday of Orthodoxy, in 843, on the very day of the reinstatement of icons, celebrating the end of Iconoclasm. They attend a

[25] Ibid., 303–4.

[26] Denisi, 'The image of Britain in the literary magazine *Pandora* (1850–1872)', *Kampos: Cambridge Papers in Modern Greek*, 5 (1997), 23–46.

[27] Tziovas, '*I Papissa*', 427–33; Macrides, 'The fabrication of the Middle Ages', 29–37.

liturgy at the Theseion, now a church dedicated to St George, feast at a banquet as guests of the bishop of Athens, observe the customs of the clergy, meet a line-up of weird and wonderful holy men, discuss matters of dogma, sightsee on the Acropolis and in the Agora, and finally go to stay at the monastery of Daphni for ten days (188–214).

In this account, Joan and Frumentius, called 'children of the North', 'children of the West' and 'Germans', meet 'Easterners', also called 'Hellenes', for the first time. They look for vestiges of ancient Athens, but all that is left are some monuments which have been turned into Christian churches. The 'children of the West' find nothing much to admire in Athens. The Agora no longer holds philosophers but astrologers, diviners, dream interpreters and teachers who come down from the schools on Hymettus to attract students. Roïdis inverts Martin Polonus's account: here it is the 'Easterners' who gather around Joan to learn from her. In fact, Joan and Frumentius are more Hellenic than the Hellenes: 'They were accustomed to the simple and unseasoned foods of Germany of the time where such banquets began and ended as in the *Iliad*, with roast meats' (194). The food and drink of their eastern hosts Joan and Frumentius find revolting; one thing alone they admire, and that is the 'archaic' beauty of the Athenian women and this, thanks to Iconoclasm:

> This improvement of the Attic race began in the years of Iconoclasm when Byzantine icons were banished so that the women, instead of having endlessly before their eyes gaunt Panagias and skinny saints, raised their eyes once again to the reliefs of the Parthenon and gave birth to children who were like these. (201)

The visit to Athens displays the same stylistic techniques and characteristics found elsewhere in *Pope Joan*. The documentation in footnotes and in endnotes supports and clarifies the text. Yet here, as throughout the work, the picture of the Middle Ages is a pastiche, and the sources on which it is based are drawn from different periods but hardly ever from the ninth century. The ascetics whom Joan meets in Athens and from whom she hears miracle stories range from early martyrs and fourth-century desert hermits to tenth-century saints (192–3).[28] When the bishop of Athens questions Joan on dogma and especially about westerners' views on transubstantiation (197), he anticipates the controversy by two centuries and the formulation of a doctrine by four.[29] But Roïdis gives his readers the slip in a footnote where he explains, correctly, that 'the word transubstantiation (*metousiosis*) was not

[28] Batthaios, Athanasios, Meletios, Paphnoutios, Nikon.

[29] J. Pelikan, *The Growth of Medieval Theology (600–1300)* (Chicago, 1978), 184–204; *The New Schaff–Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge* (ed. S. M. Jackson et al., New York, 1911), XI, 494–501.

yet in use' (197, n. 1). He therefore has the bishop question Joan about 'the Eucharist'. Those readers who check the endnotes for further guidance find, however, that Roïdis loses any credit he may have gained for scholarly precision: the author divulges that Joan's answer to the bishop is the same as that given by the bishop of Salona to the seventeenth-century English traveller, Wheler (282). As usual with Roïdis, the surprises do not end here for on reflection it becomes clear that Joan's reply, like the bishop of Salona's, represents the Eastern view on the question.

Roïdis not only plays havoc with time in his reconstruction of the past; he also shows disregard for the integrity of his sources, misrepresenting their content. Liudprand, the tenth-century bishop of Cremona who travelled twice to Byzantium, is Roïdis's source for the food and drink the easterners serve 'the children of the west' and for the westerners' attitudes to it (281). Liudprand is also his source when it comes to eunuchs. In an endnote, Roïdis reveals, 'There were so many castrated bishops at that time that Otto's ambassador, Liudprand, suggested that eunuch was an honorific title of Greek bishops' (280). Yet a reading of Liudprand's *Report* on his mission to Constantinople shows that what he actually commented on is the way in which Greek bishops do everything for themselves, acting as their own stewards, grooms and innkeepers; whence they are doubly uncanonical as eunuchs (*capones*) and innkeepers (*caupones*).[30]

In another passage Roïdis takes liberties with a source he does not even cite. Among the holy men who told miracle stories to the assembled crowd on the first Sunday of Orthodoxy was St Nikon, who related that,

> consumed in his heart by a desire to see the glorious beauty of the All-holy One, he fasted and prayed day and night, until the merciful Queen of All, taking pity on him, appeared before him with such beauty and radiance, that he was blinded and rendered one-eyed. He would have been made completely blind, if he had not managed to close one eye. (196)

The *Life of St Nikon*, the only source for this saint, does give an account of the miraculous appearance of the 'All-blameless Mother of the Lord' to Nikon. However, in the *Life* she saves him from drowning, while in Roïdis's version she appears to him in response to his prayerful desires to see her beauty, a sight which renders him blind.[31]

The effect of Roïdis's abuse of his material is to make readers aware of his fabrications, of the processes of reading and writing, and of the present. He reinforces an awareness of the present through his repeated comparisons with contemporary issues and people, juxtaposing his medieval material

[30] Liudprand of Cremona, *Relatio de Legatione Constantinopolitana*, ed. and tr. B. Scott (Bristol, 1993), ch. 63.

[31] *The Life of St Nikon*, ed. and tr. D. F. Sullivan (Brookline, MA, 1987), 68.28–70.49.

with the politics, the church and the women of his day. All three can be found in Joan's visit to Athens, where Joan and Frumentius found the bishop of Athens, Niketas, treating kindly the dirty ascetics who came out of their hiding places on the Sunday of Orthodoxy: 'The hospitable court bishop Niketas was obliged to look after them, as our candidates for parliament are to shake hands with the scum of the market place and the criminals from the mountains' (193). Again, the two westerners are impressed by the beauty of the virgins of Athens and also by their modesty, wrapped as they are in long mantles:

> Their glances, instead of being shared out like holy bread to the pedestrians, were concentrated on the ground ... so that they could avoid puddles and impropriety ... They were in every way different from today's girls, who are so much like married women that one is at a loss to understand why their fathers seek out husbands for them. (201–2)

In this last passage, Roïdis's comparison shows the past in a more favourable light than the present. This is, however, a striking exception: on the whole, the juxtapositions show that the past is alive in the present. Roïdis's references to the survival of paganism in Christianity is another example of this idea. He remarks on this subject throughout the work, as also in the notes at the back, but Joan's visit to medieval Athens provides him with the best opportunity to draw the reader's attention to similarities and continuities in pagan–Christian practices:

> Christianity smothered idolatry, and so the harmless victim made the murderer its universal heir, bequeathing to it temples, rites, sacrifices, oracles, priests and dream interpreters. Taking all these things over, the Christians transformed them for their use just like plagiarists take others' ideas, naming temples churches, sacrificial altars sanctuaries, processions litanies and the gods saints. Poseidon St Nicholas, Pan St Demetrius and Apollo Elijah. But on these the priests hung, in order to make them more revered, also a long beard, as the pimps of Rome hang a blonde wig on their dependants to attract more customers. (188–9)[32]

Nothing much has changed and this applies especially to the church. In the middle of his description of the liturgy which the westerners hear, Roïdis breaks off and addresses the reader:

> But, reader, I think it superfluous to listen to the end of the liturgy which in any case was as *Byzantine* then as it is today and, according to the Catholics, will remain so throughout the Ages, impervious to civilization and bound to the conventions of the middle ages like the barnacle to the rock. (191)[33]

[32] See also *Papissa*, 158, 190, 281 for comments on pagan survivals.

[33] Italics from the first edition (1866).

Roïdis makes tangible for his readers not the medieval past but the medievalness of the present.

Joan's visit to Athens also provides Roïdis with the opportunity to present westerners' views of Byzantium, as they are known from medieval sources and later writings. In the Athens pages, 'Byzantine' is a label reserved for cuisine and eunuchs, court and emperors, icons and the liturgy. Like other medieval and modern travellers to Greece, the Germans find Byzantine food and drink unacceptable and the oriental fanaticism of the holy men repulsive. They look for classical remains, but what they find are transformed temples and charlatans.

In *Pope Joan* Roïdis chose a western medieval subject with a western heroine and a long tradition of western scholarship. In this way, he gave his Greek readers, who were better acquainted with Greek heroines who fought for Greek causes, a subject, a period and a perspective hardly known to them. Through his 'medieval study', with its concerns and interest seemingly foreign to those of contemporary Greeks, he was able to reveal the reality of the Greece of his day which was as 'Byzantine' as it had ever been. He offered a paradoxical continuity in Greek culture to his fellow Greeks. Roïdis's Byzantium was no 'connecting link' but rather a clinging 'barnacle'.

In his presentation of *Pope Joan* as a 'medieval study' and in his concern to give a 'true picture of that murky period', Roïdis was attempting to restore what 'modern historians' had overlooked in their desire 'to justify through history the aims and inclinations of the party to which they belong' (70). He had in mind Paparrigopoulos and Zambelios, whose views on medieval Hellenism helped to fuel the Great Idea.[34] (See the contributions by George Huxley and Paschalis M. Kitromilides to the present volume, Chapters 2 and 3.) In his *History of the Greek Nation*, Paparrigopoulos asserted that the modern Hellenes 'were the direct descendants, especially of medieval Hellenism ... closely tied to it by religion and the state'.[35] Although Paparrigopoulos's views are fundamental to the creation of *Pope Joan*, his name and his writings are never directly mentioned.[36]

Roïdis's debt to Zambelios was, however, explicitly acknowledged. Roïdis directs his reader to the latter's *Byzantine Studies* (1857) for translations of Latin sources, such as Liudprand's *Report*, or for Byzantine sources (194, n. 1, 278, 281). He names *Pope Joan*, a 'Medieval Study' on the title page,

[34] Herzfeld, *Ours Once More*, 39–52; for Roïdis and the Great Idea see A. Georganta, *Emmanouil Roïdis. I poreia pros tin Papissa Ioanna (1860–1865)* (1993), 207–11.

[35] K. Paparrigopoulos, *Istoria tou ellinikou ethnous* (2nd edn, 1886), 3.22–4; also K. Th. Dimaras, *Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos* (1986). On Paparrigopoulos and Roïdis, see Georganta, *Emmanouil Roïdis*, 62, 147, 157–8, 234.

[36] Roïdis does not always cite the texts he uses, any more than he uses the texts he cites: see Macrides, 'The fabrication of the Middle Ages', 34–7.

inspired, no doubt, by the title of Zambelios's work.[37] A further reference to Zambelios can be seen in Roïdis's choice of the first Sunday of Orthodoxy for the day of Joan's arrival in Athens. Zambelios attached great political significance to this day, the first Sunday in Lent, interpreting it as the day of the Greek nation's revival:

> How many of those who find themselves at the service for the first Sunday of Lent reflect that that rite of *Orthodoxy*, an ecclesiastical rite in appearance, has great political gravity in the biology of Neohellenic rebirth?[38]

The restoration of icons was also of central importance for the survival and development of 'art' (*kallitechnia*), according to Zambelios. Roïdis stands this opinion on its head when he comments, playing with words when he comments that a change in the Orthodox Church's ecclesiastical iconography is imperative, not least from the point of view of the 'beauty of children' (*kalliteknia*); for when 'Byzantine icons were banished ... women ... raised their eyes once again to the reliefs of the Parthenon and gave birth to children who were like these' (201).

If Roïdis's medieval subject suited his purposes well, so too did his choice of a woman as his central character. Recent Greek literary works, a historical and a romantic novel respectively, had featured heroines: Stefanos Xenos's *The Heroine of the Greek Revolution* (1861) and Panagiotis Soutsos's *Charitini, or the Beauty of the Christian Religion* (1864).[39] These novels, set in more recent times, reinforced patriotic and Christian sentiments.

It was with *Charitini* that Roïdis specifically engaged in *Pope Joan*. Panagiotis Soutsos, the Greek contemporary most frequently named in Roïdis's book, had written *Charitini* as an 'antidote to Ernest Renan's foolish babblings against Christ's divinity'; he described Renan's work as 'the poison of society, and especially of Greek society, which awaits its resurrection'.[40] Renan, mentioned likewise in *Pope Joan*, had sought in his *Vie de Jésus* (1863) to establish the historical truth concerning Christ; his book had caused an outcry in Greece.[41] In Charitini, Panagiotis Soutsos created a heroine whose beauty was that of a 'Parthenon sculpture', a woman who exchanged eros for spiritual love, leaving behind her home, child and husband in order to live as a nun. Educated – she knew Petrarch and Dante by heart – Charitini fell in love with Christian poetry and 'came to understand why the gentiles abandoned the wisdom and the rhetoric of

[37] I owe this suggestion to Dimitrios Livanios.

[38] Zambelios, *Vyzantinai meletai*, 449.

[39] Denisi, *To elliniko istoriko mythistorima*, 87, 230–55.

[40] Georganta, *Emmanouil Roïdis*, 225–7, 256–60 on P. Soutsos; on Renan: P. Soutsos, *Charitini i to kallos tis Christianikis thriskeias* (1864), title page and prologue.

[41] See Angelou edition, 190, 288, 291, 319–21; Georganta, *Emmanouil Roïdis*, 50–52, 289–90. On Renan, see G. G. Charlton, *Positivist Thought in France* (Oxford, 1959), 86–126.

the Hellenes, accepting the new philosophy, the new ethics and the new political science of a preacher unknown to them'.[42] 'Having once given herself over to the worship of an unjust husband, she now took as bridegroom the just God and entered on a blessed life.'[43] Her new mother, the abbess, spoke to her in psalms and hymns, and together they travelled the world. Charitini's example worked a conversion on her former husband, who sacrificed his life in the war against the infidel, in the 'slaughter for the Faith'.

It is not hard to see in Joan an inversion of the qualities found in Charitini. It is not just that Roïdis made Mr Panagiotis Soutsos's poetry the subject of many humorous asides.[44] His heroine, whose idea of the good life was to live as a monk in search of worldly fame and glory, can be understood as the poison to be administered to counteract the antidote. Given the influence which Romantic poetry had on the patriotic and amatory sensibilities of Greek readers, Roïdis was bound to react in this way.[45] Indeed, one reader's hostile response reflects just how far Roïdis was seen to have overturned the values celebrated in *Charitini*: *Pope Joan* is described as the 'overthrow of the ethical and religious foundations of our society'.[46]

But it was not only recent Greek heroines of historical or romantic novels that Roïdis had in mind when he wrote about the woman who became pope. He also had women readers to think about, women who in the Greece of his day were starting to form part of the reading public, as subscribers, members of societies sponsoring lectures, as readers, and as writers.[47] As readers of novels Greek women, like women elsewhere in Europe, were starting to cause concern: their devotion of time to reading 'took them away from their duties'; their identification with heroines of novels inspired them with 'contempt for practical life'.[48] They were abandoning their families and maternal ideals.

This new woman of Athenian society, as well as the novels she read, become objects of Roïdis's sharp attentions in *Pope Joan*. In the preface, Roïdis professes respect for his Greek readers (71), and in his narrative addresses both men and women readers, distinguishing between them in

[42] Soutsos, *Charitini*, 40.

[43] Ibid., 59.

[44] Georganta, *Emmanouil Roïdis*, 109, 117, 225–6, 250, 256–7.

[45] Eleni Varika, *I exergesi ton kyrion* (1987), 57.

[46] See p. 377: the letter (March 1866) of an anonymous reader to the editor of *Vyzantis*.

[47] See generally, Varika, *I exergesi ton kyrion*, esp. 66–9; also P. M. Kitromilides, 'The Enlightenment and womanhood: cultural change and the politics of exclusion', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 1 (1983) 39–61, repr. in *Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy* (Aldershot, 1994), Study VII.

[48] Varika, *I exegersi ton kyrion*, 154–9; K. Flint, *The Woman Reader 1837–1914* (Oxford, 1993).

the form as well as the content of the address.[49] With men, an alliance is formed, while comments directed at women readers are mostly at their expense.[50] *Pope Joan* parodies historical and romantic novels,[51] derides the Byzantine yoking of church and state, and pokes fun at almost everything. Yet it is first and foremost the story of a woman who would be a man.[52] Such women were to be found not only in the West. (A Byzantine empress had, after all, put an end to iconoclasm.) The Athens of Roïdis's day was full of them. In this way, too, 'it was as Byzantine then as it is today'.

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[49] Tziovas, '*I Papissa Ioanna*', 435–7. The reader addressed by Roïdis mediates between the narrator and the real reader of the work: see I. Kacandes, 'Orality, reader address and "anonymous you": on translating second-person references from Modern Greek Prose', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 8 (1990), 223–43, esp. 229–32 and 240, n. 14.

[50] Kacandes, 'Orality', 230–31.

[51] Tziovas, '*I Papissa Ioanna*', 427–40; Macrides, 'The fabrication of the middle ages', 39–40.

[52] It is symptomatic that an anonymous reader recommended the book to 'cosmopolitan women who are not in need of a husband' (p. 367). For Roïdis's own attitude to women writers, expressed many years later, see his essay, 'Ai grafousai Ellinides', *Apanta*, V (ed. A. Angelou, 1978), 121–31, and especially the comment: 'We like women writers on condition that in writing they do not change their garb to men's.'

8

Papadiamantis, ecumenism and the theft of Byzantium

*Robert Shannan Peckham**

The location of Greek culture

Imagining himself looking down at Europe from an aeroplane in 1929, Giorgos Theotokas noted the innumerable contrasts which the continent presented to his view. Europe, he reflected, could be likened to the domesticated space of a garden where contending national colours blended into a harmonious ensemble.[1] For Theotokas at least, Greece's European destiny hinged centrally on the rejection of a critical tendency, exemplified by the writings of Fotos Politis, to pit the nation's indigenous traditions against the new cultural formations and technologies of the West: jazz, aeroplanes and motorcars. If the country's cultural life was to remain buoyant, it was, in his view, imperative to disencumber the nation of its exclusive 'Byzantine traditions and search for a new path' westwards.[2] Among those writers celebrated as embodiments of national Greek values by Politis's 'provincial' brand of criticism, one whose work represented a treasure-trove of 'Byzantine and popular art' was Alexandros Papadiamantis.[3]

Theotokas's manifesto serves as a reminder of how frequently critical readings of Papadiamantis's fiction have been framed by emotive concerns about Greece's relation to a secular, Western identity, on the one hand, and an Orthodox, Eastern identity, on the other. Later in his career Theotokas significantly modified his views, turning to Orthodox mysticism as a source of

* I am grateful to Geoffrey Gilbert for comments on an earlier version of this paper.

[1] G. Theotokas, *Eleftherο Pnevma* (repr. 1973), 5.

[2] Ibid., 6.

[3] Ibid., 16. According to Theotokas (p. 25), his criticism was aimed, not against Papadiamantis, but against those who made a fetish of his writings.

inspiration.[4] It is none the less ironic in the light of his early belligerent essay that Theotokas should be singled out as a notable Orthodox thinker in Christos Giannaras's study *Orthodoxy and the West*, a work which undertakes to reinforce the unbridgeable differences between Greece's Byzantine, Orthodox heritage and the Catholic or Protestant West. Indeed, the section devoted to Theotokas is contained in a lengthy chapter entitled 'Papadiamantis and his "school"'.[5]

Papadiamantis himself has been enlisted in a wider debate about the place of Greek culture. The recent publication of demotic translations of his fiction, for example, has given rise to articles and letters in the Greek press expressing anxiety about the adulteration of national traditions.[6] The 'corrupt' renderings of Papadiamantis's prose have been construed as symptomatic of a literary consumerism that threatens to sever the nation's contemporary culture from its historical roots.[7] Conversely, the problem of translation has raised questions as to whether the Orthodox world inscribed in Papadiamantis's narratives is in fact recoverable by Greek readers, or indeed relevant, at the close of the twentieth century.[8]

Papadiamantis's writing thus continues to be disowned or championed largely within the parameters of a debate over what constitutes an 'authentic' Greek identity. Often, indeed, he serves as a synonym for the Byzantine and the Orthodox as an antithesis to the West. As Fotis Kontoglou uncompromisingly asserted: 'Papadiamantis is Greece and Orthodoxy.'[9] Such a reverential treatment finds its expression in Kontoglou's celebrated iconographic portrait and in the numerous pages devoted to Papadiamantis by Orthodox critics from Zissimos Lorenzatos to Stelios Ramfos, Giannaras and others.[10] (On these writers, see further Vasilios N. Makrides's contribution

[4] See Theotokas's collection of essays, *I Orthodoxia ston kairo mas* (1975) and P. D. Mastrodimitris, 'I exelixi kai ta ystera endiaferonta tou Giorgou Theotoka (I pnevmatiki poreia tou pros tin Orthodoxia)', in *Pente dokimia gia tin Neoelliniki Pezografia* (2nd edn, 1989), 125–49.

[5] Ch. Giannaras, *Orthodoxia kai Dysi: I Theologia sti Neoteri Ellada* (1992), 406–35. For a discussion of Orthodoxy's role in Greek anti-Occidentalism, see V. Makrides, 'Le rôle de l'Orthodoxie dans la formation de l'Antieuropéenisme et l'Antioccidentalisme Grecs', in G. Vincent and J.-P. Willaime (eds), *Réligions et Transformations de l'Europe* (Strasbourg, 1993), 104–16, and the same author's contribution to the present volume.

[6] See, e.g., Giannaras in *I Kathimerini*, 28 April 1996, and the debate in the pages of *Ta Nea*, 23 January 1996.

[7] In this connection, see P. M. Kitromilides's discussion of the controversy in Greece surrounding the publication of Jean-Baptiste Duroselle's *Europe: A History of its Peoples* in 1990: 'Europe and the dilemmas of Greek conscience', in *Greece and Europe in the Modern Period: Aspects of a Troubled Relationship* (ed. P. Carabott, 1995), 1–15.

[8] See G. Thalassis, 'Oi neoi kai o Papadiamantis' , *Ependytis*, 1–2 June 1996.

[9] F. Kontoglou, 'O Papadiamantis o pnevmatikos odigos mas', in *Alexandros Papadiamantis: keimena gia ti zoi* (ed. N. D. Triantafyllopoulos, 1979), 233.

[10] See, e.g., Z. Lorenzatos, *Meletes* (1994), 1.235–65, S. Ramfos, *I palinodia tou Papadiamanti* (1972).

to the present volume – Chapter 12.) Papadiamantis's hymns have been recorded by Lycourgos Angelopoulos's Greek Byzantine Choir,[11] and his skull, in what may well be a unique example of veneration for a modern writer, is preserved as a relic in Skiathos's main church.

The collapse of the Soviet empire and the prospect of a European Union expanded eastwards has rekindled anxieties over Greece's fate within the privileged grounds of the European garden.[12] Writing on Papadiamantis has been inextricably bound up with such issues of cultural difference, with the predicament of how to distinguish 'Hellenic Hellenism' from European Hellenism.[13] Byzantium has come to represent just one version of Hellenism, yet one which has striven to project itself as the sole genuine and incontestable authority. It is ironic that this brand of anti-Occidentalism has drawn extensively on sources of anti-Westernism that are themselves deeply Western; traditions which involve a questioning of 'civilization' which was, especially in the latter half of the nineteenth century, associated with industrialization and conceptualized as a process of deculturation, in opposition to salutary, organic national cultures. At the same time, the rejection of a dominant Western identity, in Greece as elsewhere, has frequently educed a counter-identity that replicates the very form it was intended to supplant.

The purpose of the present paper, however, is not to deny or affirm the ineluctable and exclusive identification of Greek culture with Orthodoxy and Byzantium. Instead, I shall focus on Papadiamantis's novel *The Gypsy Girl* (I Gyftopoula), serialized in the newspaper *Akropolis* between April and October 1884, in order to explore how Papadiamantis's fiction largely anticipates how this debate has subsequently been framed.[14] My argument is that a reading of a novel set at the very moment of Byzantium's demise in April–May 1453 can show how Papadiamantis's narrative dramatizes contending versions of Hellenism and inquires into Byzantium's relations to nineteenth-century Greece.

Attempts to constrain Papadiamantis within a particular legitimating narrative of the Greek Byzantine past have obscured the fact that one of *The Gypsy Girl*'s main preoccupations is precisely the struggle for possession of the past; with 'history' as an inevitably thwarted bid to impose on the past a retrospective ideological order. Allusions to the besieged imperial city of Constantinople and to the heroine's successive incarcerations are juxtaposed with the protagonists' tendencies to elude boundaries by dreaming of fantastic pasts and futures. History, conceived of as an unequivocal, containing narrative of the past, is undermined by mythic counter-narratives that resist

[11] Hymns of Alexandros Papadiamantis, 2 cassettes (Greek Byzantine Choir, 1993).

[12] See Thalassis, 'Oi neoi kai o Papadiamantis'.

[13] The term was coined by George Seferis in 1938: see now *Dokimes* (1981), I, 82–104.

[14] The novel appeared in book form (1912) only after the author's death.

closure. Moreover, at the same time as the narrator asserts 'the need to confine ourselves to things that have a direct bearing on the story (*istoria*)', he expresses concern about the 'indeterminacy' or disparateness of the present in which he is writing.[15]

The reading of Papadiamantis's novel proposed here owes much to the re-evaluation of the nineteenth century inaugurated by such critics as Nasos Vayenas and Sofia Denisi, who have exposed many of the assumptions about the historical novel in Greece before 1880 as fallacious.[16] The first novels of independent Greece were not, as is still widely believed, historical novels, and within the genre of the historical novel there existed a rich variety of styles in which Greece's medieval past was imagined (notable among them, that of Roïdis, discussed by Ruth Macrides elsewhere in the present volume – Chapter 7). While Papadiamantis's 'Byzantine religiosity and colour' have been generally discussed (by K. Th. Dimaras, for example, who attributes 'a Byzantine origin to the fondness Papadiamantis had for parodies of religious texts'[17]), scant scholarly attention has been paid to *The Gypsy Girl*, the last of Papadiamantis's historical novels, and one which deals explicitly with the Byzantine past.[18] As the pre-publication announcements in *Akropolis* asserted, *The Gypsy Girl* was a novel with national preoccupations, while the newspaper added that 'the period in which the drama is set is a momentous one'.[19]

The novel is set during a time of instability, as the Ottoman Turks threaten to engulf the vestiges of the Byzantine Empire, while the Orthodox population is torn between compromise with Rome or a rejection of Union. *The Gypsy Girl* focuses on the real historical character of the philosopher George Gemistos Plethon (1360–1452), and the plot is enacted on the eve of Constantinople's fall – fancifully, since Plethon actually died in the June of the previous year. The narrative progresses inexorably towards the fateful event

[15] A. Papadiamantis, *Apanta* (ed. N. D. Triantafyllopoulos, 5 vols, 1981–89), I, 467.

[16] S. Denisi, 'Gia tis arches tis pezografias mas', *O Politis*, 109 (1990), 55–63, 'Oi arches tou ellinikou istorikou mythistorimatos', *Diavazo*, 291 (1992), 28–34, *To elliniko istoriko mythistorima kai o Sir Walter Scott (1830–1880)* (1994).

[17] M. Alexiou, 'Writing against the silence: antithesis and ekphrasis in the prose fiction of Georgios Vizyenos', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 47 (1993), 265; C. Th. Dimaras, *Istoria tis Neoellinikis Logotechnias* (1987), 382. For the most part discussion of Papadiamantis's relation to Byzantium has been confined to generalizing reflections: see, e.g., P. Kanellopoulos, 'Alexandros Papadiamantis: to Vyzantio os anamnisi', *Nea Estia*, 355 (Christmas 1941), 36-7.

[18] The novel is, however, available in several editions and has recently been translated into French as *La Fille de Bohème*, tr. K. Coressis (Arles, 1996). It enjoyed some critical success on its original publication and was turned into a six-act drama by D. Siapatis and I. Margaritis (1885). It was also translated into Italian before its serial publication had finished: see Papadiamantis, *Apanta*, 1.633. For a brief but perceptive discussion, see A. Nikolaïdis, 'To Archipelagos tou Alexandrou Papadiamanti', *Mnimosyno tou Alex. Papadiamanti* (1981), 118–22.

[19] *Apanta*, I, 446.

and Aïma, the heroine, is fatally crushed in Plethon's cave by a marble statue of Artemis in an apocalyptic earthquake that accompanies the city's subjugation. While the narrative centres for the most part on the mystery of Aïma and her relations with Plethon, the reader is also guided through versions of the protagonists' pasts. Thus, the narrator records how, pursued by Frankish enemies on the island of Rhodes, Plethon abandons the infant girl; Aïma is fortuitously rescued and taken to Monvemvasia, where she is raised by a gypsy family. After frustrated attempts to reclaim the girl, Plethon finally succeeds in bringing Aïma to his sanctuary near Sparta, where he plans to initiate her into his pagan rites. At the last moment, however, before Plethon is able to celebrate the girl's marriage to a young gypsy called Machtos, the young couple are killed in the earthquake.

Contested pasts and dreams of the nation

Papadiamantis may be considered the first Greek imaginative writer to have engaged critically with Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos's conception of a tripartite model of cultural continuity (on which see Paschalis M. Kitromilides's paper in the present volume – Chapter 3). While a wide historical spectrum is evoked in Papadiamantis's densely textured language, which incorporates ancient, modern, biblical and Byzantine words, place too is frequently dramatized in terms of a dynamic syncretism.[20] In many of the later stories set on Skiathos, the peripatetic narrator moves from the modern town to outlying sites associated with his own past and with earlier histories of the island to explore what N. G. Politis, speaking of folklore, called 'the partial, but unbroken continuation of an earlier life'.[21] If syncretism in Greece became an entrenched national discourse in the nineteenth century,[22] Papadiamantis's narratives critically engage with it. The shifting narratorial angles in the texts suggest that histories can be told in different ways; that, far from being fixed or confinable, the past is subject to endless rewritings and rereadings.

The interpretative processes of writing and reading are explored in some depth in *The Gypsy Girl*. The narrator explains in a cursory preface, for example, that his work is based upon oral legends of Laconia recorded by an acquaintance.[23] Elsewhere he alludes to medieval chronicles, thereby linking historical discourse and popular memory. (It was in 1884, coincidentally

[20] See D. Ricks, 'Papadiamantis, paganism and the sanctity of place', *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 2 (2) (1992), 169–82.

[21] Quoted in M. Herzfeld, *Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology, and the Making of Modern Greece* (New York, 1990), 104.

[22] See C. Stewart, 'Syncretism as a dimension of national discourse in Modern Greece' in C. Stewart and R. Shaw (eds), *Syncretism/Anti-Syncretism: the Politics of Religious Experience* (1994), 127–44.

[23] Papadiamantis, *Apanta*, I, 348.

the year of the novel's publication, that Politis had coined the term *laografia* for folklore.[24]) Throughout the novel attention is drawn to the context of its composition and reception, and the narrator disparages an amateur Italian translator for misinterpreting the character of his heroine.[25] In an 'Autographical Chapter', the reader is presented with alternative and contradictory versions of his protagonist's biography contained in two recently published manuscripts. By introducing the testament of a certain Dometios the narrator reflects on the task of the historian both to instruct and to entertain.[26] While he distinguishes between the vocation of the novelist (*mythistoriografos*) and that of the historian, he suggests that history and fiction are deeply intertwined.[27] Earlier, in a chapter entitled 'Historical Digression', the narrator makes an aside to the reader in which he draws a comparison between the medieval past and the present of the novel's writing, adding that he should 'refrain from these slips of the pen', which are inappropriate in a historical work. Similarly, at the end of the novel the differences between a remote past and the present are once more underlined, when the narrator remarks that contemporary readers will inevitably feel alienated when they read a novel set in the Middle Ages.[28]

What such self-referential interventions in *The Gypsy Girl* highlight is the extent to which narrations of the past take place within shifting and contingent systems of belief. As he listens to George Scholarios's speech, Plethon himself ponders the manner in which each age has a distinct style of expression. The art of writing, he concludes, is inseparable from the conventions of a given period and is 'very far from being the expression of individual sentiments'.[29] In this way, the insistence of Papadiamantis's narrative on probing the conventions and contexts of historical discourse recalls, to an extent that has not been hitherto acknowledged, the parodic strategies of Roïdis's *Pope Joan* (on which see Ruth Macrides's contribution to the present volume – Chapter 7).[30]

The interpretation and absorption of the past into the present are vital concerns in *The Gypsy Girl*, concerns which implicate the narrator in his own capacities as a chronicler of '*istories*'. At the same time, Plethon's attempt to revitalize Byzantium on the brink of its destruction, through the resuscitation of ancient Greek culture, transposes the narratorial focus from aesthetic

[24] See N. G. Politis, *Laografia (Deltion tis Ellinikis Laographikis Etaireias)*, 1 (1909), 3.

[25] Papadiamantis, *Apanta*, I, 633, 636–44.

[26] Ibid., 641.

[27] Ibid., I, 622. Papadiamantis engages here with a debate about the role of prose writers as historians of the nation whose task it is to instruct: see D. Tziovas, *The Nationism of the Demoticists and its Impact on their Literary Theory (1888–1930)* (Amsterdam, 1986), 46.

[28] Papadiamantis, *Apanta*, I, 467, 658.

[29] Ibid., 476.

[30] But see G. Valetas, *Papadiamantis: i zoi-to ergo-i epochi tou* (1957), 513.

considerations to the political significance of history as an interpretative process. Greek historiography, for example, associates Plethon with the re-emergence of the term Hellenism to denote 'modern as well as classical Greek civilization, instead of serving merely as an equivalent of paganism'.[31] The emphasis on the continuity of Greek culture was articulated as a geographical shift away from the Roman foundations of Constantinople back to the Greek mainland.[32] By focusing on the ambiguous historical figure of Plethon, who was 'the last of the Hellenes, in the sense of pagans of the classical age, and the first of the Greeks, in the sense of modern nationalists',[33] Papadiamantis's novel foregrounds the interrelated issues of religion, national identity and prevalent nineteenth-century conceptions of cultural continuity. In 1881, for example, Paparrigopoulos, in the *Prolegomena* to the second edition of his history, had sought to demonstrate that the contemporary usage of terms such as 'Hellenes' and 'Hellenism' to denote a distinct Greek identity was a retrieval, rather than a misinterpretation, of their original meaning.[34]

The divisions which the novel exposes within the Byzantine world on the eve of its collapse mirror the contestation of Greece's identity in the late nineteenth century. The capricious historical context in which factions group and regroup, vying for supremacy, provides an appropriate setting for exploring the interactions between religious communities and the shifting relationship between church and state, and between state and nation. It could be argued that in *The Gypsy Girl* Papadiamantis is concerned with the philosophical and, in the final analysis, theological differences between the Roman West and the Greek East. According to such a schematic reading, the narrator's disapprobation is directed at Plethon, in whose honour Cosimo de Medici founded the Platonic Academy in Florence.[35] Plethon and his disciples are representatives of a Western humanistic conception of ancient Greek culture which seeks to impose itself on alien soil. Thus, according to one critic, Plethon's disciple Velminnis, as a native of Zante who is half-Venetian and bears a foreign name, is 'the most suitable person for embodying western humanistic perceptions of ancient Greece in the novel'.[36]

[31] C. M. Woodhouse, *George Gemistos Plethon: the Last of the Hellenes* (Oxford, 1986), 71. For an interpretation of Plethon as a proto-nationalist, see, classically, A. Vacalopoulos, *Origins of the Greek Nation: the Byzantine Period, 1204–1461* (tr. I. Moles, New Brunswick 1970) 126–35.

[32] See S. Runciman, *Mistra: Byzantine Capital of the Peloponnese* (1980), 111. Papadiamantis's family on his mother's side came from Mistra, a fact alluded to in several texts: see, e.g., *Apanta*, 3.419, 4.413.

[33] Woodhouse, *George Gemistos Plethon*, 7.

[34] A view contested by P. Thereianos in 1885: see Tziovas, *The Nationism of the Demoticists*, 79.

[35] See S. Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity* (Cambridge, 1985), 125.

[36] See N. D. Triantafyllopoulos, 'O agonos erotas i desinit in piscem', in *I adiaptoti mageia: Papadiamanti ena afieroma* (1992), 13–38 (28–9).

Despite the narrative's strictures against Plethon's polytheism, however, the Neoplatonist is not portrayed in entirely negative terms: on the contrary, he is described as an ardent nationalist who seeks to revive Greece by an appeal to its classical past. As the narrator remarks: 'He was one of the few who had a consciousness of nationalism and his heart burned with patriotism.'[37] In fact, Plethon, although branded by the narrator as an apostate, is consistently linked to the *ethnos*. As a young man, the narrator continues, the philosopher devised a new system of government, which, had it been implemented, might well have averted the present catastrophe.[38]

The political and religious groupings in *The Gypsy Girl* are rather more complex, therefore, than East versus West, or Orthodoxy versus Humanism. The narrator describes numerous overlapping and sometimes antagonistic groupings which exist within the Orthodox community on the eve of the fall of Constantinople. He discloses that within Orthodoxy itself there are those for and against union with Rome; those like Plethon's former pupil Cardinal Bessarion, who see such a union as a salvation and those such as George Scholarios, who perceive it as a liability which would precipitate further ruptures within the empire. Even this opposition is qualified by Papadiamantis, for Scholarios is portrayed as devoid of humour; as Runciman has remarked: 'George Scholarios himself did not strike all his contemporaries as being fully Orthodox.'[39] By contrast, Plethon represents an emergent Greek nationalism associated with the term 'Hellene', an ideology challenged by clerics such as Scholarios, who construe it as a relinquishing of the ecumenical idea.

'Greece' in Papadiamantis's novel is represented as a contested ground where different religions and their divergent interpretations of the Greek past struggle for predominance. On the level of the plot this contest is articulated through the fate of the heroine Aïma. As the narrator himself remarks, Aïma's orphanhood and mysterious ancestry become an allegorical representation.[40] The narrative centres on the never-solved mystery of Aïma's birth: according to one version, she is a royal child, while according to another she was conjured forth by Plethon; while yet another tradition maintains that she is the product of Apollo's union with a mortal woman.[41] The search to uncover Aïma's identity is, on one level, the quest for 'narrative

[37] Papadiamantis, *Apanta*, I, 469.

[38] Ibid, 462.

[39] Runciman, *The Great Church*, 125–7.

[40] Papadiamantis, *Apanta*, I, 622.

[41] According to one version, Aïma is the daughter of the Emperor John and his bride Evdokia (1.639). John VIII Palaiologos, who negotiated the union with the Roman Church, died, without issue, however, and his wife was not called Evdokia (1.370–85).

plenitude',[42] but in the event, what comes to fill the incomplete historical narration are successive dreams.

Aïma's origins are repeatedly linked to dreams and fantasy, while Plethon appears at the beginning of the novel 'exuding a mystery', as if 'he did not seem to be of this world'. According to one legend, Aïma was a fantastic creature conjured into existence by Plethon's magic; in the course of the narrative, she experiences events as if they were hallucinations; when she accidentally meets the philosopher, but fails to recognize him, she is perturbed and convinced she must be dreaming.[43] And when she is subsequently visited by the mysterious prophetess, Aïma is again uncertain whether or not the visitor was a figment of her imagination.[44] As the narrator remarks in a passage that describes Aïma's expectations of being rescued by Machtos from the monastery on receipt of his letter, individuals project their dreams upon the texts they are reading. In short, they read what they dream: 'One reads but one's own dreams, and words written in ink do not have the power to obscure images of happiness.'[45]

Nor are Aïma and Plethon the only characters in the novel who are associated with dreams. In a chapter entitled 'Machtos's Dream', the young gypsy dreams of the heroine's veiled face, and the narrator concludes: 'his dreams were after all nothing but dreams. However terrifying they had been, they deserved no more attention than one gives to those mad dreams, those dreams of happiness that are dreamed every day with open eyes.' Machtos's vision anticipates the fable of Annivas Velminnis's love for the mermaid, while the motif of the shrouded face recurs when the nun Veati dreams that she has managed to force open the door of Aïma's cell in the monastery, yet is unable to distinguish the girl's face. Finally, ideas of concealment and revelation are closely linked to the historian's task of uncovering the past, to the dark cloud which threatens to envelop Byzantium, and to the process of recollection as Aïma, urged on by the nun Sixtina, struggles to salvage her past:

> The depths of her soul were a bottomless pit, sombre, dark, frightening, on which time had set its seal. Whoever dared pull the cover away suddenly would experience vertigo in the face of the abyss, and would bitterly regret his barbaric act.
>
> Aïma, her hand against her breast, hesitated a long time, before she finished by expressing herself quietly:
>
> 'I remember ... something else ... but it's a dream.'
>
> 'A dream?' repeated Sixtina.[46]

[42] F. Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (1989), 223.

[43] Papadiamantis, *Apanta*, I, 354, 638–9, 380.

[44] Ibid., 392. Aïma's visitor represents, as the narrator subsequently informs the reader, 'the incarnation of the glorious traditions of her [Aïma's] lineage' (658).

[45] Ibid., 575.

[46] Ibid., 423, 602–8, 508, 448, 521.

The subterranean imagery here recalls Plethon's cave which the shepherd stumbles upon in the novel's preface and in which he discovers the buried statues. It also resonates with other allusions to burial and digging which have accrued in the narrative.[47] The narrator himself refers to medieval chroniclers burrowing away in the undergrowth of history. Similarly, the excavation of the past is connected with literacy, as Aïma strives to remember how to read, painfully deciphering the written word in a process of linguistic excavation: 'Aïma strove in vain to decipher the words. It was a distant recollection, deeply buried in her memory.' Here legibility is bound up with memories interred beneath the linguistic surface.[48] The passage that focuses on Aïma's reading draws attention to the depth of language which is haunted by the traces of the past. The heroine becomes a translator of her own history, an excavator of her former identity which remains latent.[49] In short, Aïma delves into her early past in an attempt to recover fragmentary memories ('the partial, but unbroken continuation of an earlier life', in Politis's words), just as statues are heaved up from antiquity into the present and Plethon endeavours to resuscitate the ancient Hellenic past. Finally, the narrator, too, is intent on disinterring Greece's medieval past. Such endeavours are frustrated, the novel intimates, because, contrary to the narrator's assertion, 'words written in ink' do in fact have the power to obscure the dreams which they purport to disclose.

On one level, the heroine's struggle to awaken into self-consciousness finds its equivalent in the nation's own awakening, and the novel's numerous dream sequences touch upon that fantasy which 'reaches out', as Jacqueline Rose has observed in another context, towards 'the unspoken components of social belonging'.[50] Like Aïma's childhood, the nation's narration is lost in inscrutable myths of origin. In this sense, the heroine does indeed become, in the narrator's words, 'an allegorical figure', and the telling of her individual story 'cannot but ultimately involve the whole laborious telling of the collectivity itself'.[51] Aïma's efforts to recover the submerged secret of her origin are connected to the nation's strivings to recuperate its multiple historical identities.[52] If *The Gypsy Girl* ends with the act of

[47] There is a striking affinity here with Freud's use of such subterranean, archaeological figures in his writing on the interpretation of dreams; see D. Kuspit, 'A mighty metaphor: the analogy of archaeology and psychoanalysis', in L. Gamwell and R. Wells (eds), *Sigmund Freud and Art: His Personal Collection of Antiques* (1986), 133–51.

[48] Papadiamantis, *Apanta*, I, 564, 381.

[49] See too the tale of the phantom monk who haunts the monastery (1.502) and the popular superstitions that Plethon's cave is haunted (I, 415).

[50] J. Rose, *States of Fantasy* (Oxford 1996), 6.

[51] See F. Jameson, 'Third World literature in the era of multinational capitalism', *Social Text* (Fall 1986), 69.

[52] On nationalism as a gendered discourse, see A. McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York, 1995), 352–89; also A. Parker et al. (eds), *Nationalisms and Sexualities* (New York, 1992).

recollection frustrated, and Aïma's origins are nowhere convincingly explained, it is worth recalling Renan's celebrated remark of 1882, two years before the publication of Papadiamantis's novel, that the nation's identity is founded as much upon an act of collective amnesia, as upon an abundant legacy of remembrances.[53]

The theft of Byzantium

The siege and eventual fall of Constantinople form the backdrop for the narrative's main action: the struggle for the possession of the heroine. Aïma is linked to the imperial capital, both through her reputed identity as a royal child, and through her relationship with the 'mysterious' prophetess who visits her: the capture of the city is inextricably bound up with Aïma's own imprisonment. And the dynamics of containment and evasion here can be linked to short stories by Papadiamantis which touch upon the appropriation of Byzantium, on endeavours to contain Byzantium in an alien and inflexible context.

As Dimitris Triantafyllopoulos has shown, echoing an earlier essay by Lorenzatos, texts such as *Lambriatikos psaltis* contain an implicit criticism of the removal of icons from churches to museums.[54] Indeed, that story appeared in 1893, the year in which the collection of artefacts from the Christian Archaeological Society was publicly displayed in the recently completed National Archaeological Museum. (The Byzantine Museum in Athens was not formally opened until 1930.)[55] A prime mover in the Society was Georgios Lambakis, who travelled through Greece and visited Skiathos in his search for Byzantine artefacts. A lecturer in the Theological School at Athens, Lambakis was German-educated and one of the outstanding figures pressing for union of the Orthodox and Anglican churches.[56] According to Triantafyllopoulos, Lambakis exemplifies an essentially Western and idealized interpretation of Byzantine art promoted by an urban élite and vigorously opposed by Papadiamantis in his journalism, an interpretation symbolized most graphically by the building which now houses the Byzantine Museum in Athens: a Florentine-style palace built in 1848 for Sophie de Marbois, the Duchess of Plaisance.

[53] See E. Renan, 'What is a Nation?', tr. M. Thom, in H. K. Bhabha (ed.), *Nation and Narration* (1990), 11.

[54] Lorenzatos, *Meletes*, 256, D. D. Triantafyllopoulos, 'O Alexandros Papadiamantis kai i techni tis Orthodoxias', in N. D. Triantafyllopoulos (ed.), *Fota olofota: ena afieroma ston Papadiamanti kai ton kosmo tou* (1981), 177–96.

[55] See A. Kokkou, *I merimna gia tis Archaiotites stin Ellada kai ta prota mouseia* (1977), 283–8.

[56] Lambakis was a friend of the Philhellene Lord Bute; see R. J. Macrides, *The Scottish Connection in Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* (St Andrews, 1992), 5.

The main thrust of Triantafyllopoulos's argument, in support of which he cites Papadiamantis's journalism extensively, is thus clear: the state has usurped the nation's heritage. For Papadiamantis, the argument goes, Orthodoxy is construed as an indigenous institution defined in rigid opposition to the West; he condemns the appropriation of icons by a secular, foreign context, and their transformation from active agents into a moribund art for art's sake. Certainly, museums are represented, whenever they occur in Papadiamantis, as sepulchral dwellings, in stark antithesis to Lambakis's view of Greece (1896) as 'the great museum'.[57]

There is no doubt that in a number of his articles and stories Papadiamantis is concerned with the state's pernicious influence on Orthodox practice. In *O Kalogeros* (1892), set in Athens, the autocephalous Greek Church is upbraided by the narrator for corrupting the official practices of the Ecumenical Church. The flagrant intervention of the state and its secular interests in the running of the Church is decried, as is the Church's conformity to heretical Western habits. And in 1889, Papadiamantis had published an article condemning Russia's malign influence in Greece and remarking that 'apart from roubles, the cascading torrent from the North has brought with it political scheming, as well as customs and ideas alien to genuine Byzantine traditions'.[58] It seems likely that Papadiamantis was alluding to the stream of Western-inspired Russian icons which were entering Greece at the time. There is a connection in this context with Lambakis, who served for a time as personal secretary to the Russian-born Queen Olga, a munificent patron of the Christian Archaeological Society. Ironically, or perhaps not so in view of Dostoevsky's own trenchant criticism of Russia's Europeanized élite, Papadiamantis published his translation of *Crime and Punishment* in the same year.[59]

As a number of Papadiamantis's texts allude to the theft of Byzantine icons which are placed in the alienating context of a museum, it is perhaps significant that *The Gypsy Girl*, too, begins with a theft, as the shepherd Vrangis's cloak is stolen from him and Aïma is kidnapped by Frankish

[57] See, e.g., Papadiamantis, *Apanta*, III, 434, 459. The narrator remarks at the beginning of the novel that the statues discovered by the shepherd will doubtless be hauled off to some European museum (I, 347). Contrast G. Lambakis, *Geniki eisagogi eis tin Christianikin Archaiologian* (1897), 24. The tensions between Church, nation and state were recently brought to the fore in Greece with the Rotunda controversy. A historical monument that falls under the jurisdiction of the Byzantine Archaeological Service, the Rotunda in Thessaloniki is also claimed by the Church as a religious site. I am grateful to Charles Stewart for letting me have a copy of his lecture 'Who Owns the Rotunda? Church vs. State in Greece' (University College London, 16 November 1995). See also the articles in the newspaper *To Vima*, 2 December 1995, and the contribution of Eftychia Kourkoutidou-Nikolaïdou to the present volume (Chapter 13).

[58] Papadiamantis, *Apanta*, II, 325, 5.157; see also Triantafyllopoulos, 'O Papadiamantis', 179.

[59] Papadiamantis's translation has recently been published in book form: Th. Dostoevsky, *To Englima ke I Timoria* (1992).

soldiers. Later Aïma is indicted for theft by the villagers, and according to one legend the heroine herself was snatched by the devil from the imperial palace in Constantinople. Indicatively, on her first appearance in the narrative, Aïma is described as an icon, and it is her 'theft' which prompts the main action of the novel: the struggle to control her destiny as a symbol of Greece's mythic, classical and imperial pasts.[60] This attempt at containment reaches its climax with Aïma's incarceration within the monastery and subsequently in Plethon's sanctuary, a containment mirrored in the siege of the imperial city, which is personified in the novel as 'the queen of cities, the city of the Mother of God'.[61]

Papadiamantis offers no solution to this central contest over Aïma's destiny, but rather indicates through the inclusion of the preface, which describes the discovery by a shepherd of statues of Apollo, Hera and Zeus in a cave, that the past will always be resurfacing as a question in the present. At the same time, the contending versions of the past offered in the course of the novel explore the containment of history within a single, grand narrative. It is significant that, raised by gypsies, Aïma remains on the margins of conventional society, despised by the local population, just as Plethon, described in the opening pages as an 'Egyptian', passes either for 'a Jewish merchant, or a vagabond gypsy'.[62]

Paradoxically, Aïma stands on the edge of the nation which she symbolically represents: there is doubtless a connection, in this context, between Papadiamantis's gypsies and notions of the bohemian artist. In 1882–83 Papadiamantis had published his novel *Oi Emboroi ton Ethnon* (*The Merchants of Nations*) under the pseudonym Bohème. No doubt Papadiamantis was familiar with Alexandros Paspatis's study of the gypsies of the Ottoman Empire which had appeared in 1870 and had fuelled interest in Romany lore. 'A stranger to the peoples in whose midst they live,' Paspatis had declared, 'fleeing from their society and civilization, wild and independent, they neither have a political history or a literary history.'[63] As rootless outsiders, disengaged from their host societies, gypsies undermined, or perhaps reaffirmed, the settled life of the nation. A collection of essays on *National Life and Thought* (1891), which contained chapters on European nations, including Greece, concluded with a section on gypsies in which the author asserted that 'the Gypsies have no politics, they have less than no national

[60] Papadiamantis, *Apanta*, I, 120–28, 639, 359.

[61] See, e.g., Papadiamantis, *Apanta*, I, 618, and R. Saunders, 'Creating contents: Papadiamantis' *Fonissa* as an allegory of epistemological treachery', *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*, 18 (1) (1992), 55–63.

[62] Papadiamantis, *Apanta*, I, 52–60, 624.

[63] A. Paspatis, *Etudes sur les Tchinghianés ou Bohémiens de l'Empire Ottoman* (Constantinople, 1870), 1. Paspatis also wrote extensively on Byzantine history; see, e.g., his *Vyzantinai Meletai* (1877) and *Ta Vyzantina Anaktora kai ta Perix afton Idrymata* (1885).

aspirations. What *is* the Gypsies' fatherland?'[64] Such confusions about the status of the disengaged gypsy are explored in Papadiamantis's novel through the fate of Aïma. For she is and is not a gypsy; she is both included and excluded by the society she seeks to represent; she is illiterate, but retains memories of a former literacy. Indeed, as Aïma struggles to grasp the significance of the words traced on the paper of Machtos's letter, Papadimantis's narrative intimates that language, no less than history, is an endless striving to recuperate migrant meanings.

Conclusion

If there is one lesson that may be learned from the often heated debate over the 'authentic' Papadiamantis it is surely this: that all too often critics have remained blind to struggles for the possession of tradition enacted in the narratives themselves. This paper has sought to demonstrate how *The Gypsy Girl* explores the discontinuities, or incoherences, of an ideology that vigorously promoted an archaeological model of culture in late nineteenth-century Greece. A close reading of the novel reveals the contestary dimension of Papadiamantis's narrative, which repeatedly inquires into the nature of historical memory to suggest that the memory of loss, in this case the Fall of Constantinople, also involves the loss of memory, the amnesia out of which visions of the past's recovery are engendered.[65] The narrator makes of Aïma an allegory of the nation, while the heroine's efforts to recapture her past are paralleled by Plethon's vain attempts to regain the besieged City. The absence which such losses, personal and historical, entail come to be filled by those mythic dreams upon which all fictions and all national histories are predicated: for 'nations, like narratives, lose their origin in the myths of time and only fully realise their horizons in the mind's eye'.[66]

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[64] F. H. Groome, 'The Gypsies', in *National Life and Thought of the Various Nations Throughout the World* (1891), 379. See also Georgios Drosinis's novel *To Votani tis Agapis*, serialized in *Estia* in 1888, where a shepherd falls in love with a gypsy girl, with fatal consequences.

[65] See the narrator's comments (*Apanta*, I, 618).

[66] Bhabha, *Nation and Narration*, 1.

9

Two cheers for Byzantium: equivocal attitudes in the poetry of Palamas and Cavafy

Anthony Hirst

In October 1930, at the age of seventy-one, Kostis Palamas addressed an international Byzantine congress held in Athens. His theme: 'The Byzantine Inheritance in Modern Greek Poetry'. 'Whether they like it or not,' he said on that occasion, 'the modern Greek poets are heirs to the Byzantines.'[1] Palamas seems to allow the possibility of a degree of reluctance in the acceptance of this heritage, and both Palamas and Cavafy were, I believe, among Byzantium's somewhat reluctant heirs. But heir to Byzantium Cavafy too certainly acknowledged himself to be. He believed his family to be of Byzantine origin;[2] and in his poetry, as Diana Haas points out, the use of the possessive pronoun 'our' in conjunction with 'nation', 'race' and 'language' is largely confined to Byzantine contexts.[3]

It is easy to see why Byzantium appealed to Cavafy. He was a Greek of the diaspora, born in 1863 to a Constantinopolitan family in Alexandria, and Alexandria was his home throughout his adult life. Greece, which as a political and physical reality, and as a concept, is perhaps the most prominent subject in modern Greek poetry, from Solomos to Elytis, hardly figures in the poetry of Cavafy. It was too restricted a concept to encompass either his actual or his imaginative world, whereas Byzantium, as successor to the 'great Panhellenion',[4] the Greek world stretching around the Mediterranean from Sicily to Egypt, was capable of representing for Cavafy what it was that

[1] K. Palamas, *Apanta* (16 vols, 1962–69), VIII, 567.

[2] C.P. Cavafy, 'I genealogia tou Kavafi', *Nea Estia*, 501 (1948), 622–9, 622.

[3] D. Haas, '"Ston endoxo mas byzantinismo": simioseis gia ena sticho tou Kavafi', *Diavazo*, 78 (1983), 76–81 (80). The usage presumably derives from K. Paparrigopoulos: see Paschalis M. Kitromilides's contribution to the present volume (Chapter 3).

[4] Cavafy, 'Eis to Epineion', *Ta poiimata* (new edn, 2 vols, ed. G. P. Savidis, 1991), I, 76.

he belonged to in being Greek. And the Byzantine empire had once incorporated the area of the Hellenistic kingdoms of Syria and Egypt, in which the greater part of his historical poetry is located.

Palamas, on the other hand, was a poet of Greece. Born in 1859 in Patras, brought up in Missolonghi, he spent his adult life in Athens. For Palamas the centre of the Greek world, past and present, was Athens, or more precisely the Parthenon, which Palamas, like so many before and since, saw as the supreme symbol of Greek culture; and it was Athena who dominated the pantheon of his imagination. To this Atheno-centric Hellenism he tried to accommodate Byzantium.

In his address to the Byzantine congress, Palamas stresses the value of Byzantium as a source of inspiration for epico-lyric poetry: as a source, primarily, of heroic figures. He speaks of two ways in which the poet can make use of the historical and mythical inheritance: the more dramatic way is for the poet to adapt himself to his subject; the more lyrical to adapt the subject to his own inclinations.[5] Palamas does not say what the first method entails and he offers no examples; but it is surely Cavafy's method. When Cavafy takes a historical text as the starting-point, the poem often proves to involve a complex and subtle interaction with its source. This seems consistent with Palamas's notion of the more dramatic method of adapting oneself to the subject.

As an example of the second, the lyrical method, Palamas cites 'Legend of Love' by his younger contemporary Lambros Porfyras, and he says of its protagonist, the legendary Byzantine hero Digenes Akrites, that he is 'not only a Heracles of heroism. He is also a Dionysus of Love.'[6] Porfyras's poem makes no mention of these or any other classical deities; the only comparison is with St George.[7] Although Palamas is here responding to secondary, not primary Byzantine material, his response is symptomatic of his unwillingness to see Byzantium in its own terms, and of his tendency to translate it into terms drawn from classical antiquity. This tendency is prevalent in Palamas's own poetry on Byzantine themes. In *The King's Flute*, for example, he calls the emperor Basil II 'the Centaur-King', his mother Theophano 'Aphrodite', thus, at a stroke, classicizing Byzantium and mythologizing its history.[8] As a poet, Palamas is not interested in history as such, only in what he can make of it. He uses historical details or fragments culled from historical texts merely as springboards for his imagination. This is the essence of the lyrical method. Legendary material will serve just as well. In the poems on Byzantine themes which he included in his first volume, *Songs of my Homeland* (1886), there is a clear preference for legendary over historical material.[9]

[5] Palamas, *Apanta*, VIII, 568.
[6] Ibid., 569.
[7] L. Porfyras, *Ta Poiimata (1894–1932)* (ed. E. Politou-Marmarinou, 1993), 165–7 (168).
[8] Palamas, *Apanta*, V, 47, 42.

Panagiotis Agapitos has demonstrated how in *The King's Flute* Palamas transforms and subverts Byzantium to make it conform to a Helladic ideology, Athens-centred and classicizing.[10] I do not propose to go over the same ground, but to go further and to point to a complementary or even contrary tendency in *The King's Flute*: that is, to those elements of direct antagonism towards both Byzantium and Christianity which have often been overlooked in discussions of the poem.

Palamas tells us how his epic poem grew from a 'single germ-cell', the potent image of the emperor Basil II worshipping the Panagia within the Parthenon in the year 1018.[11] This he found in Kedrenos, who speaks not of the Parthenon but of the church which it had by then become.[12] From Pachymeres he derived the structural framework of the poem. Pachymeres tells how some of the soldiers of Michael VIII, besieging Constantinople in the year 1260, found the corpse of Basil II, removed from its tomb and stood against a wall with a shepherd's reed-pipe or flute in its mouth.[13] Palamas brings this flute to life[14] and it becomes the principal voice of the poem, relating, both directly and through many subordinate voices, Basil's triumphant progress from northern Greece to Athens. The climax of the poem is the emperor's extended speech, or prayer, or confession, before the image of the Panagia within the former temple of Athena. The Flute begins its long introduction to this speech by decrying the desecration of the Parthenon, 'disfigured by the blind eye and coarse hand of the Nazarene'. The 'Byzantine craftsman' has 'insolently touched ... the flawless rhythms of the Athenian creator'. The 'treasury of purity' has become a 'weird half-breed', 'tainted as by some foreign seed'.[15] The implication is that the Byzantines are no better than foreigners.

According to Tsatsos, the emperor comes to the 'temple of the cosmic deity, call her if you will Athena, or Panagia, or Aphrodite'.[16] Similar syncretistic assertions occur again and again in discussions of *The King's Flute*, but the cosmic deity with many names is difficult to locate within the poem itself. All the voices of the poem seem clear about the distinction between Athena and the Panagia. The emperor addresses the Panagia as

[9] See, e.g., 'To nanourisma' and 'Skylogiannis' (Palamas, *Apanta*, I, 32–5, 163–70).
[10] P. A. Agapitos, 'Byzantium in the poetry of Kostis Palamas and C. P. Cavafy', *Kampos*, 2 (1994) 1–20 (6–11).
[11] Palamas, *Apanta*, X, 539.
[12] Cedrenus, *Comp. Hist.* CSHB, II, 475.
[13] Pachymeres, *De Mich. Pal.* 2.21 (CSHB, I, 124–6).
[14] Palamas, *Apanta*, V, 31–2.
[15] Ibid., 112–13.
[16] K. Tsatsos, *Palamas* (1936), 193.

'conqueror of Athena' and praises her for having shown the ancient 'philosophers to be without wisdom, the rhapsodes babblers'.[17] But the Flute, in a parody of a hymn, tells her that under her protection the whole world is in despair: 'all its wealth, the treasure stores of strength and grace and art and wisdom have all been denied for your sake, and for you has come into being a world poor in intellect, bare of knowledge, thoughtless and barbarous'.[18] From neither point of view has the Panagia assumed the role of Athena. Athena herself calls the Panagia an outlaw, a foreigner and a witch;[19] and the Rock of the Acropolis says that the lamp of Athena has been replaced – by that of 'the lawless, foreign Jewess'.[20] The unified cosmic deity, the supposed symbol of continuity, dissolves in the multiplicity of the poem's voices. None of these voices should be identified in any simple way with the voice of Palamas. In his synopsis he speaks of 'the inspiration of the poet and the soul of the emperor bound indissolubly in an atmosphere of visionary dream';[21] and yet it is the Flute which acts as the poet's mouthpiece.

Papanoutsos describes *The King's Flute* as 'the epic par excellence of Greek continuity',[22] and this is how it has generally been received. The assumption that the poem is an achieved synthesis has obscured the dialectic of its voices. In relation to the unity and continuity of Greek culture, the Flute is the most important but by no means the only dissenting voice. It was Palamas's evident intention to range the heroes of Byzantium alongside the heroes of ancient Greece and the heroes of the War of Independence. Nevertheless, the poem does not so much present the synthesis of the classical, Byzantine and modern stages of Greek culture, as explore the problematic of their integration, and in particular the problematic of Byzantium for a Greek like Palamas whose starting-point is the primacy of the classical culture. The poem does not disguise, but through its dissenting voices repeatedly insists on, the antagonism between classical and Byzantine values.

Much of the action of Palamas's other poem of epic dimensions, *The Dodecalogue of the Gypsy*, is set in the immediate environs of Constantinople around the time of its fall. The picture which it offers of the City is a disparaging one. The Gypsy speaks of a corrupt city, incapable of its own defence and richly deserving its impending fate, its emperor refusing to be distracted from his chariot-racing by warnings of the Turks' approach.[23]

[17] Palamas, *Apanta*, V, 115, 122.
[18] Ibid., 110–11.
[19] Ibid, 102.
[20] Ibid, 96.
[21] Ibid, 520.
[22] E. P. Papanoutsos, *Palamas, Kavafis, Sikelianos* (3rd edn, 1971), 18.
[23] Palamas, *Apanta*, III, 385–91.

Palamas is not concerned here with historical accuracy. The Byzantium of the *Dodecalogue* serves as an image of decadent civilization which must be destroyed before any good can come of it. In this poem the classical tradition fares little better, for part of the Gypsy's message is that there is no future in clinging to the past. In common with the Apparition of the emperor's dream in *The King's Flute*, the Gypsy has a utopian vision of a world organized by science, where wisdom and love prevail, and in which all past cultures and national boundaries are transcended.[24]

There is an unresolved tension in the work of Palamas, between the patriotic poet who saw it as his duty to strengthen and sustain the national aspirations of his people, and his anarchic or revolutionary *alter ego*, influenced by Nietzsche and by socialism, which is manifested in the Gypsy. And Palamas's desire to portray the unity of Greek culture is in conflict with his antipathy towards certain aspects of Byzantium.

It is no criticism of Palamas's poetry as poetry to say that he is not concerned with historical accuracy. The poet is not obliged to be a historian. But from a 'historical poet', as Cavafy claimed to be,[25] we would expect a greater concern with historical accuracy. And this is what we find, although, when events are presented dramatically, accuracy proves to be a slippery concept.

There were only two periods in Cavafy's poetic career when Byzantium figured as a major preoccupation of his historical poetry. Very little is left to us from the first period. We have the titles of eleven poems which the poet himself classified under the heading 'Byzantine Days'.[26] These had probably all been written by 1892 and were later destroyed, except for two which Cavafy reworked but never published. As Sarah Ekdawi persuasively argues, these poems appear to have been inspired by Gibbon, even though they evidently predate Cavafy's reading notes on the *Decline and Fall*.[27] They may have adopted Gibbon's Western perspective; and it is clear from the titles that many concerned the Crusades.

Between 1892 and 1914, Cavafy produced only one new historical poem on a Byzantine theme, 'Manuel Komnenos', first written in 1905, but not published until more than ten years later.[28] To this period also belongs 'In Church',[29] which, though not a historical poem, contains a significant Byzantine reference. Cavafy tells us how the sights, sounds and smells of a Greek church and its services remind him of 'the great honours of our race,

[24] Ibid., III, 412–16, 420, 441–3; V, 139–41.
[25] Reported in G. Lechonitis, *Kavafika aftoscholia* (2nd edn, ed. T. Malanos, 1977), 19.
[26] Haas, 'Simioseis', 79, 81, n.3.
[27] S. Ekdawi, 'Cavafy's Byzantium', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 20 (1996), 17–34.
[28] Cavafy, *Poiimata*, I, 51, 146.
[29] Ibid., 146.

our glorious Byzantinism'.[30] Haas argues that the phrase 'our glorious Byzantinism' should be understood to indicate 'the nostalgic recollection of an aesthetic and sensual ideal'; and she rejects the ironic interpretation[31] put forward as early as 1924 by Alkis Thrylos[32] (and defended most recently by Ekdawi[33]). As Haas herself shows, however, the term *Vyzantinismos*, together with its equivalents in French and English, had, from its introduction in the late nineteenth century, largely negative connotations; and it must be admitted that Cavafy's coupling of 'glorious' and 'Byzantinism' is ambiguous and a little strange. 'Byzantinism' can hardly be a substitute for 'Byzantium', though it might refer to some aspects of Byzantine life. Courtly ceremonial seems the aspect most likely to be suggested by the trappings and rituals of a church. On the other hand, 'Byzantinism' may not refer to Byzantium itself at all, but to contemporary reception and representation of Byzantium, in the rhetoric of politics or in patriotic poetry, for example.

But the test of Cavafy's later attitude to Byzantium and Byzantinism must be the sixteen Byzantine poems on which he was at work during the years 1914–27, his second period of intense poetic interest in Byzantium. These are listed below. The list would be much longer, if it included every poem whose subject could be located between AD 330 and 1453. The criteria for inclusion are that a poem should make some reference to specific Byzantine persons or events, and that the date of the historical subject matter should be no earlier than the sixth century.

1914 Writing of 'Exiles' (unpublished)
1914 (or later) Final version of 'Theophilos Palaiologos' (unpublished)
1915 (or 1916) Publication of 'Manuel Komnenos'
1916 First draft of 'In the Sixth or Seventh Century'
1917 First draft of 'Anna Comnena'
1919 Rewriting and publication of 'Imenos' (original unconnected with Byzantium)
1920 Publication of 'Anna Comnena'
1921 Publication of 'Byzantine Nobleman in Exile, Composing Verses'
1921 Writing of 'It's Taken' (unpublished)
1921 Date on MS of 'After Bathing' (unfinished)
1923 Date on MS of 'From the Unpublished History' (unfinished)
1924 Publication of 'John Kantakouzenos Triumphs'
1925 Publication of 'Of Coloured Glass'
1925 Date on MS of 'The Patriarch' (unfinished)
1925 Date on MS of 'At Epiphany' (unfinished)

[30] Ibid., 52.
[31] Haas, 'Simioseis', 81, 80.
[32] A. Thrylos, 'K. Kavafis', *Kritikes Meletes*, III (1925), 185.
[33] Ekdawi, 'Cavafy's Byzantium', 27–9.

1926 Date on MS of 'The Emperor Conon' (unfinished)
1927 Publication of 'Anna Dalassene'
1927 Date on MS of 'In the Sixth or Seventh Century' (unfinished)

Many of these poems are based on historical texts, Byzantine and modern. Cavafy does not use fragments of texts merely as springboards for his imagination in the manner of Palamas, but constructs his poems in close, but not necessarily obvious, dialogue with his sources. I propose to illustrate this with reference to 'Manuel Komnenos'. This is a clear case of a poem designed to allow both an innocent and an informed reading. The innocent reader, with only the text of the poem to go on, will find a sombre tribute to a devout emperor. The emperor, realizing he is dying, ignores the predictions of the astrologers that he has many years still to live, orders ecclesiastical garments from the monks' cells, and dies a pious, dignified and contented death, a man in calm control of events. The reader of Niketas Choniates, whose account of the death of Manuel Komnenos in 1180 must be the source for this poem, will find that the innocent reading is, as a historical narrative, untenable. What Choniates stresses is the extent to which the emperor believed the astrologers, so that by the time he finally admitted he was dying it was too late to appoint a regent for his young son, or even to find suitable monastic garb. Manuel dies in distress over his son's future, a gullible and foolish old man overtaken by events, a pathetic spectacle in a tattered black cloak that barely reaches his knees.[34] To the informed reader, then, Cavafy's poem must appear as an exercise in hagiography, and the voice of the poem is revealed as that of some Byzantine courtier or cleric, not the voice of the poet himself. Cavafy must have expected the comparison with Choniates, and thus the poem invites the reader to discover the falsity of its perspective, a perspective to which Choniates pays lip-service when he throws in a few words of pious deathbed rhetoric, but which, more broadly, his account negates.

The dates of Cavafy's second Byzantine period, 1914–27, are highly suggestive; and although the evidence is purely circumstantial, it does appear that Cavafy's renewed interest, from 1914, in Byzantium as a subject for poetry is related to contemporary events.

In 1914 Byzantium was, we might say, in the air. With the territorial gains in Macedonia and Western Thrace, following Greece's military successes in the Balkan Wars of 1912–13, and the accession in 1913 of a king with the auspicious name of Constantine, the realization of the Great Idea suddenly seemed much closer. However, with the outbreak of the First World War, the Great Idea was no longer sufficient to unite the people of Greece. The country was split between the supporters of Venizelos, who wanted to enter

[34] Niketas Choniates, *Hist.* CFHB, 220–22.

the war on the side of Britain, and the supporters of the king, who favoured Germany, but thought it best for Greece to remain neutral. This resulted in 1916–17 in the situation (not unknown in the Byzantine world) of rival governments in different cities. Although civil war was averted, the division continued to dominate Greek politics until it was resolved, for the time being, in late 1923 and early 1924, with the landslide election victory of the Venizelists, the King's departure from Greece, Venizelos's return from exile, and the plebiscite of April 1924 which showed an overwhelming majority in favour of abolishing the monarchy. A republican constitution was eventually adopted in 1927, the last year we can positively associate with any Byzantine poem by Cavafy.

Cavafy, it must be remembered, observed these events as an outsider, since Greece was not his country. Closer to him, in one sense at least, were the events in Asia Minor. Through the negotiations following the First World War, and the presence of the Greek army in Asia Minor from May 1919, it seemed, until the Disaster of September 1922, that a further major advance towards the realization of the Great Idea was about to be achieved. This expectation is not, however, reflected in the poetry of Cavafy.

What do Cavafy's later Byzantine poems have to say about Byzantium, in itself and in relation to the contemporary Greek world? In contrast to the heroic or decadent Byzantine fantasies of Palamas, they offer a critical assessment of Byzantium. They present, mainly in dramatic form, and sometimes through fictional characters, the realities of Byzantine politics. They show us, more often than not, Byzantium as a state divided against itself, an analogue perhaps of the Greek situation at the time the poems were written.

'Exiles', written in 1914 but not published by Cavafy, is set in Alexandria. The exiles in question have evidently been part of one of the unsuccessful rebellions against Basil I. Their life in exile is tolerable only because they do not expect it to last long. They anticipate a renewed rebellion, in Epirus or Smyrna, which will easily overthrow the emperor.[35] This is, if you like, their parochial version of the Great Idea, but the reader is expected to know that their hopes were disappointed.

The poem 'Anna Comnena' is a venomous attack on the author of the *Alexiad*, for what Cavafy sees as her feigned grief over the death of her husband. The only real grief of 'that power-hungry woman' was, he tells us, that the empire was snatched away from her by her brother John, when it was 'almost within her grasp'.[36] By the time this poem was completed and published in December 1920, Greek troops had been in Asia Minor for more than eighteen months: the Great Idea hung in the balance. Irrespective of Cavafy's intentions, the poem might have been read as a warning. An internal

[35] C.P. Cavafy, *Anekdota poiimata 1882–1923* (ed. G. P. Savidis, 1968), 163–5.
[36] Cavafy, *Poiimata*, II, 26.

power struggle is not the kind of episode of Byzantine history patriotic Greeks would have wanted to be reminded of at this period, any more than the debauchery of the reign of Michael III, to which Cavafy refers in 'Imenos', published in 1919.[37] And if a poet were going to write about the fall of Constantinople, he would hardly be expected to write only of despair at its loss, without mentioning the hope for its recovery. Yet that is just what Cavafy does in two unpublished poems.

The first of these, the latest and only surviving version of 'Theophilos Palaiologos', was evidently written in 1914 or later. This is one of the two poems remaining from Cavafy's first Byzantine period. It sees Theophilos's despairing words in the last year of Byzantium ('I would rather die than live') as containing 'the yearning of our race'.[38] One can hardly imagine a more negative statement in relation to the Great Idea.

In 1921, again during the Greek military occupation of Asia Minor, Cavafy wrote 'It's Taken', in which he says that he has been reading demotic songs, and the laments for the fall of Constantinople. What moved him most among the latter was a Pontic song, which tells of the arrival in Trebizond of the news of the fall of Byzantium. The song, with its strange dialect, conveys to him 'the grief of those distant Greeks, who perhaps had been believing all along that we would still be saved'.[39] This 'we' links, in ominous fashion, the disappointed hope of those Pontic Greeks, at once so distant and so close, with Greek expectations current at the time of writing. It is hardly surprising that Cavafy did not publish this oblique expression of deep anxiety and foreboding.

Also in 1921 Cavafy takes up again the theme of dissension within Byzantium, with the publication of his 'Byzantine Nobleman in Exile, Composing Verses'. This fictional nobleman had been an associate of Nikephoros Botaneiates, the emperor deposed by Alexios I. Hence his exile, in which he curses the Empress Irene, the wife of Alexios.[40]

No Byzantine poem of Cavafy can be attached to the fateful year of 1922, although he may have been working on poems which were published later. Seferis, famously but controversially, read 'Those who Fought for the Achaian League', published in February 1922, as a cryptic reference to the coming defeat in Asia Minor.[41] Seferis's intuition may not have been so far out as has sometimes been supposed,[42] but we are on surer ground in looking at Cavafy's

[37] Ibid., 16.
[38] Cavafy, *Anekdota*, 131. On the dating see pp. 235–6, and C. P. Cavafy, *Collected Poems*, revised edn (tr. E. Keeley and P. Sherrard, ed. G. Savidis, Princeton, 1992), 201.
[39] Cavafy, *Anekdota*, 183–5.
[40] Cavafy, *Poiimata*, II, 27.
[41] G. Seferis, *Dokimes*, I (5th edn, 1984), 328–30.
[42] See R. Beaton, 'The History Man', *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*, 10 (1–2) (1983), 25–6, following T. Malanos, *Kavafis 2* (1963), 136–7. Cavafy's assertion, noted by Malanos, that the

published and unpublished Byzantine poems of the 1920s, where a more direct connection might be expected. Cavafy's unfinished poem 'From the Unpublished History' is dated to 1923. The poem is based on one of the more fantastic episodes in Procopius's *Secret History*,[43] purporting to demonstrate the diabolical nature of the emperor Justinian I: 'a demon brought from Hell' in Cavafy's poem; for Cavafy is no less hostile to Justinian than is Procopius.[44] Why, in 1923, should Cavafy be interested in vilifying a sixth-century emperor? Could it be that, at a time when Greeks were counting the terrible cost of the recent attempt to recover part of the Byzantine empire, Cavafy had in mind Justinian's for the most part short-lived and costly reconquest of the West? I note that one of Cavafy's young friends observed the poet weeping over the loss of Asia Minor.[45]

In 1924, as I have noted, a decade of conflict between King Constantine and Venizelos was resolved in favour of Venizelos. In 1924 and 1925 we see Cavafy occupied with four poems about John VI Kantakouzenos, the central figure in a period of intermittent civil war from 1321 to 1353, first, as the associate of Andronikos III in his struggle against his grandfather, and then on his own behalf against Ann of Savoy, wife of Andronikos, in an attempt initially to secure the regency, later as a rival emperor to Andronicus's young son, John V Palaiologos.

The title of the first of these four poems, 'John Kantakouzenos Triumphs' (or 'Has the Upper Hand'), almost certainly derives from Gibbon. After his description of the coronation of Kantakouzenos in Constantinople in 1347 at the conclusion of the first round of conflict with the Palaiologan party, Gibbon sums up: 'He triumphed and reigned; but his reign and triumph were clouded by the discontent of his own and the adverse faction.'[46] The poem concerns a member of this 'adverse faction' who perceives that he is about to lose all his lands and property as a result of choosing the wrong side.[47] In January 1925 Cavafy published a poem about Kantakouzenos's coronation, entitled 'Of Coloured Glass', while the manuscripts of two unfinished poems, 'The Patriarch' and 'At Epiphany', concerning Kantakouzenos and his enemies, are also dated 1925.

In the poems so far considered there is little evidence of love or respect on Cavafy's part for members of Byzantine imperial houses. These poems are not the work of a poet intoxicated with the glory of Byzantium; and he is

present did not inspire the poem, is not, to my mind, decisive. Many of Cavafy's comments on his own poems seem more diplomatic than informative.

[43] Procopius, *Arc.*, XII, 20–21.

[44] C. P. Cavafy, *Ateli poiimata 1918–1932* (ed. R. Lavagnini, 1994), 155–8.

[45] P. Modinos, *Treis epistoles tou Kavafi* (1980), 9–10.

[46] E. Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (ed. J. B. Bury, 7 vols, 1909–14), VI, 526.

[47] Cavafy, *Poiimata*, II, 48.

clearly not, like Palamas, mining Byzantine history for heroic figures. John Kantakouzenos appears, at first sight, to be an exception. Cavafy seems to be presenting Kantakouzenos as some kind of hero or exemplary figure. In 'The Patriarch' he calls him 'the worthy man our race had at that time', and the line that follows contains five adjectives enumerating his virtues; three more are added in a later line; his kindness is also mentioned.[48] This excess of praise makes one suspicious; and some at least of the adjectives have their counterparts in the self-praise which Kantakouzenos, writing of himself in the third person, indulges in liberally in his *Histories*.[49] Gibbon repeatedly draws attention to the vanity and hypocrisy of Kantakouzenos's writings,[50] though he calls him, at an early point in his career, 'the first and most deserving of the Greeks'.[51] Gibbon blames Kantakouzenos for engaging in civil war to the detriment of the empire;[52] he speaks of his alliances with 'barbarians and savages' and his marriage of his daughter to a Turk in terms of 'shame' and 'baseness'; and the alliance secured by the marriage allowed, in Gibbon's words, 'the passage of the Ottomans into Europe, the last and fatal stroke in the fall of the Roman Empire'.[53] Paparrigopoulos's judgement, for once, is similar. He grants that Kantakouzenos 'was not lacking in virtues' but sees these applied to his own ends rather than the defence of the empire.[54] And Kantakouzenos's contemporary, the historian Nicephorus Gregoras, is also hostile to him.[55] This is the background against which Cavafy's poems on Kantakouzenos are written, and against which they must be considered.

In the best and best known of these, 'Of Coloured Glass', the poet tells us that he is moved by a detail in the coronation of John Kantakouzenos and his wife Irene: because they had only a few precious stones they had to wear artificial ones made of coloured glass. These bits of glass resemble

> a mournful protest
> against the unjust ill-fate of those being crowned,
> They are the symbols of what it was fitting they should have,
> of what above all it was right for them to have
> at their coronation.[56]

[48] Cavafy, *Ateli*, 195–208.

[49] See, for example, in Kantakouzenos *Hist.*, 3.100 (CSHB, II, 613), references to his ἐπιείκεια, σύνεσις and εὐγνωμοσύνη, and compare, in Cavafy, ἐπιεικής, σοφός, καλωσύνη.

[50] Gibbon, *Decline*, VI, 511–28 *passim*.

[51] Ibid., 517.

[52] Ibid., 527–8, 533.

[53] Ibid., 522–3.

[54] K. Paparrigopoulos, *Istoria tou ellinikou ethnous*, 7th edn (7 vols, 1955), VI, 188.

[55] Nicephorus Gregoras, *Byz. Hist.* 25.30–32.12 (CSHB, III, 56–200), *passim*.

[56] Cavafy, *Poiimata*, II, 50.

The language here is tricky. What does it mean to state that the artificial jewels are the 'symbols' of what it was fitting and proper for them to have? The innocent reading is that the artificial jewels are the symbols of the real jewels which they were intended to replace and simulate. This is so obviously the case that it hardly seems worth saying, and the word 'symbols' seems much too strong.

Let us suppose that Cavafy shares Gibbon's estimate of the vanity and hypocrisy of Kantakouzenos, and his judgement of the disastrous contribution which the alliance with the Turks made to the destruction of the empire. Then we may begin to suspect another force in the word 'symbols'. The bits of glass not only represent, in the sense of replacing, the real jewels that were lacking, but also represent *in themselves* what this imperial pair deserved. In other words, the superficial appearance of imperial dignity is the true measure of their worth. In that case, we might say that the word 'symbols' is redundant. Cavafy could have simply said that the bits of glass were what they deserved. But it is through the use of the word 'symbols' that Cavafy is able to maintain the ambiguity, to allow both the innocent and the informed reading.

What then are we to make of the 'mournful protest against the unjust ill-fate of those being crowned'? Again, this can be read in two ways. Does it refer to the ill-fate visited on the royal pair, or to the ill-fate, or ill-favour (for κακομοιριά can bear this meaning too) inherent in them and afflicting others?

And who, we may ask, is protesting; the emperor or the nation? In referring, in 'The Patriarch', to Kantakouzenos as 'that worthy man our race had at that time', Cavafy gives primacy to the race. In 'Of Coloured Glass' he does not say what emotion was aroused in him by the fake jewels; and it is often supposed that it was sympathy with the imperial couple; but between the reference to their shortage of real precious stones and their wearing of artificial ones Cavafy inserts, in parentheses: 'great was the poverty of our afflicted nation'. The possessive pronoun 'our' suggests that here *kratos* refers not to the organs of government but to the empire as a whole, the nation. The nation had recently been afflicted as much by the civil war between Kantakouzenos and the Palaiologan party as by its external enemies. This line (τοῦ ταλαιπώρου κράτους μας ἦταν μεγάλ' ἡ πτώχεια) is the emotional centre of the poem, a regular *politikos stichos* (the only one in the poem), which might almost have been borrowed from one of the vernacular laments for the fall of Constantinople.[57] Cavafy's sympathies, I suggest, are with the people of Byzantium and not with their

[57] Several of these laments are collected together in G. Th. Zoras (ed.), *Vyzantini Poiisis* (1956), 177–221; and in them the adjective ταλαίπωρος is used many times of the City or the Greek people.

rulers. It is as *Oikoumene* rather than *Imperium* that Byzantium appeals to Cavafy.

I cannot agree with Agapitos's conclusion that Cavafy's Byzantine poetry, and this poem in particular, is 'intent on preserving through *mimesis* the cultural heritage of the past'.[58] Nor can I agree with Christidis, who believes that the Byzantine poems are the expression of Cavafy's patriotism, and that 'Of Coloured Glass' 'embodies the Phanariot spirit, the Great Idea'.[59] (Had Christidis forgotten its publication date?) Cavafy is not a nostalgic antiquarian. The Great Idea is notably absent from his poetry, and he is not a patriot in the ordinary sense of that word. He himself said that he was not a member of a nation (*patriotis*) but a member of a race (*fyletikos*).[60] And it is in the Byzantine period that he sees most clearly reflected the suffering and divisions of his race, and sees most clearly that the responsibility then as in his own day, rests with the political leaders.

The influence of Cavafy's Byzantine poetry on Greek perceptions of Byzantium has probably been small, not least because some of the poems were unknown to the public until 1968,[61] others not published in book form until 1994.[62] Whether Palamas's presentation of Byzantium has ever had much actual influence is also open to question. Its heroic aspect has been in tune with the dominant perception, while the misgivings about the religious and aesthetic values of Byzantium have been largely ignored. Palamas, in any case, has few readers today, while Cavafy continues to speak to a wide audience; and Cavafy's poetry still has something new to contribute to the living debate about the role of Byzantium in defining, or redefining, the modern Greek identity.

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[58] Agapitos, 'Byzantium', 19-20.

[59] V. F. Christidis, *O Kavafis kai to Vyzantio* (1958), 9, 20, 22.

[60] T. Malanos, *O poiitis K.P. Kavafis* (1933), 55.

[61] Date of publication of Cavafy, *Anekdota*.

[62] In Cavafy, *Ateli*. The Byzantine poems included in this volume were first published in R. Lavagnini, 'Sette nuove poesie bizantine di Constantino Kavafis', *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici*, n.s. 25 (1988), 217–81.

10

Byzantium and the novel in the twentieth century: from Penelope Delta to Maro Douka

Marianna Spanaki

This paper will discuss two notable twentieth-century Greek novelists and their relationship with Byzantium. I shall examine novels by two women writers, Penelope Delta (1874–1941), who wrote at the beginning of the twentieth century, and Maro Douka (b. 1947), who in 1995 published a best-seller on a Byzantine theme. The work of both writers appeared at periods of renewed interest in issues related to the formation of the Greek identity and the reassessment of the historical past. Delta's two early novels *For the Homeland* (1909) and *In the Time of the Bulgar-Slayer* (1911), were written during the continuing turmoil with Bulgaria over the future of Macedonia.[1] The second novel was almost contemporary with Palamas's *The King's Flute* (1910) (discussed by Anthony Hirst elsewhere in this volume – Chapter 9) and Ion Dragoumis's *Blood of Martyrs and Heroes* (1907–11), which concerned the Macedonian Struggle. All three writers, who were personally acquainted, closely followed the political climate in Europe, saw or contributed to the rise of nationalism and had a keen interest in Byzantium. (This same period also saw, for example, the founding of the first chair in Byzantine Art [1912]; see the paper by Eftychia Kourkoutidou-Nikolaïdou in the present volume – Chapter 13.) Delta also worked towards a third novel, entitled *The Collapse*, which remained incomplete and was first published in 1983.[2] Her first two novels, however, have stayed in print, and Delta is

[1] *Gia tin Patrida. Ton Kairo tou Voulgaroktonou*. Later Delta published two novels for young people, *Mangas* (1935) and *Sta Mystika tou Valtou* (1937), in which she used information from participants in the Macedonian Struggle and documents from the archives of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These novels too raise issues of national identity in terms of language, ethnicity, race and religion, focusing on the geographical region of Macedonia.

[2] P. S. Delta, *To Gremisma*, ed. M. Spanaki (1983).

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probably the most popular twentieth-century children's writer in Greece, contributing greatly to the consolidation of an interest in Byzantium.

Douka, by contrast, came to Byzantium with her fifth novel, and only after the genre of historical fiction had regained momentum in Greece. Recent developments in the Balkans and Greece's problems with its neighbours, as well as recent migrations from the former Soviet Union, brought to the fore once again issues of Greek identity. Douka's novel with a Byzantine theme appeared, moreover, in the wake of a renewal of interest in Orthodoxy in Greece (see Vasilios N. Makrides's paper in the present volume – Chapter 12) and of a rethinking of the historical past after the fall of the Junta of 1967–74. Her previous fiction had concerned itself with the recent history of Greece and changing attitudes to politics and everyday life.[3] Already a writer of repute, and with large sales, Douka scored an instant success with her Byzantine novel, *A Cap of Purple*.[4] Both Delta and Douka have, as we shall see, cultivated Greek women's historical fiction, albeit in different terms and at periods far removed in time, and the popularity of their work invites us to examine them together.

There is also a thematic justification for this, for in terms of time the plots of the four novels under discussion extend from the Macedonian dynasty to the Comnenian period, and they deal with well-known rulers such as Basil II and Alexios I. Again, adventure and an element of romance are major characteristics of both novels. Constantinople, Asia Minor, Macedonia and Dyrrachion are the settings of most of the events narrated; the Crusaders and foreign mercenaries appear in significant roles; and the issues of succession and usurpation introduce an element of the thriller. Heroic themes are thus interwoven with court intrigues.

Penelope Delta grew up in Alexandria and was the daughter of the Chiot merchant Emmanuel Benakis, who traded successfully in Egyptian cotton, often working with English firms; he later became a Venizelist deputy, a minister and mayor of Athens. Delta had an essentially Victorian upbringing, receiving her education from a string of governesses, English or French. In her memoirs, she mentions reading major English writers (her novels are heavily influenced by the historical novel in English) and various children's books.[5] After she married the family moved to Frankfurt and she began to write more. While she was raising her family, she became involved with demoticism, the educational reform movement propagating the use of the

[3] For Douka's novels see E. Yannakakis, ' The novels of Maro Douka' in R. Beaton (ed.), *The Greek Novel AD 1–1985* (1988), 110–19, and R. Beaton, *Introduction to Modern Greek Literature* (Oxford, 1994), 285.

[4] M. Douka, *Enas Skoufos apo Porfyra* (1995).

[5] Delta, *Protes Enthimiseis*, ed. P. A. Zannas (1980), 143–4.

vernacular and the expansion of education to all social strata. In her correspondence, Delta complains that there were not enough good books for Greek children.[6] Her milieu included mathematicians, economists and diplomats, amongst them Konstantinos Karatheodoris, Ion Dragoumis and Eleftherios Venizelos, and scholars and writers such as Gustave Schlumberger and Palamas. In writing for children, she followed her ethnocentric orientation, propagating the demotic. In her Byzantine novels she used both primary sources and studies on Byzantium.

The study of the intertextual relationships between Delta's novels and the following Byzantine histories: the *Chronographia* of Skylitzes and Kedrenos, the *Chronographia* of Michael Psellos, the *Historia* of Michael Attaleiates and the *Alexiad* of Anna Comnena, together with Schlumberger's modern synthesis, *L'Epopée Byzantine*, reveal two important aspects of her historical fiction in both its textual construction and its historical interpretation. Delta's works, though they can be classified as children's literature or historical novels, may also be seen as popularized history. The novels can be perceived within the context of Greek nationalism. Delta's views were those of the intellectual community of the demoticists concerned with the institutional edifice of the national identity.[7] Literature and history were perceived by the demoticists as being of vital educational and national interest, increasing national self-consciousness. Close reading shows that Delta's novels stay very close to their initial sources as far as the nucleus of the plot and, indeed, a number of specific passages, are concerned. The fact that her novels were for the young accounts for her combination of fact and fiction and for the involvement of the young in her plots at times of military action.

The first two novels are set in the reign of Basil II and his repeated campaigns against the Bulgars, while *The Collapse* covers the times of Romanos Diogenes, with notes for the work extending to the reign of Alexios I. In *For the Homeland* and *In the Time of the Bulgar-Slayer* Delta worked on a period for which historical information was scattered in many different sources, and she sought the advice of the French Academician Schlumberger. She found it easier to produce fictional accounts of the well-known historiographic material, which she used for the historical framework of her narratives; and she appeared to be fascinated by Basil's devotion to military life and his ability to defeat his many different enemies. Delta emphasizes the emperor's meticulous organization, which brought his victories against the Bulgarians, and she was inspired as much by the Macedonian struggle of her time as by Schlumberger. The latter had already

[6] X. Lefkoparidis (ed.), *Allilografia tis P. S. Delta 1906–1940* (1956), 96, 205.

[7] See generally D. Tziovas, *The Nationism of the Demoticists and its Impact on their Literary Theory (1888–1930)* (Amsterdam, 1986).

presented an enthusiastic account of Basil's reign as that of an energetic leader and disciplinarian, and his account is closely followed by Delta.[8]

In *For the Homeland*, the historical information provided begins in 996, the year Tsar Samuel ambushed the governor of Thessaloniki and his troops, killed him, and took his son Ashot Taronites and his friend prisoners. The prisoners moved to Ochrid but Basil sent against Samuel Nikephoros Ouranos, who in 997 faced the Bulgarians on the river Spercheios and managed to defeat them. Dyrrachion, the place where Ashot and his friend had gone, came under Byzantine rule after action taken by fictional characters. *In the Time of the Bulgar-Slayer* deals mostly with Basil's progress on the Bulgarian front and with the conditions under which some aristocratic enslaved youth secretly fought as spies on the sidelines of the imperial conflict. Clear reference is made to Samuel's attempts to regain power. In 1014 the Tsar attempted to stop Basil's advance and sent a force against Thessaloniki which was destroyed by Theophylact Botaneiates. Samuel had blocked the pass near Kleidion, but after some time Basil sent a detachment from the Long Plain to attack from the rear. The Tsar escaped to Prilep, but his army fell into Basil's hands, and Samuel's soldiers suffered the dreadful fate of having their eyes put out. In both novels fictional characters are active in the plot and significantly determine the course of action – with the exception of the incident of the blinding, which is attributed to Basil's tactics for restraining his enemies. Other aspects of Basil's personality are explored, and he is presented as a rather lonely and introspective man. Precision in description is based on historical sources: for example, the description of Basil's physiognomy follows Psellos.[9] Basil was a symbolic figure for nationalist intellectuals, and his reign was seen by Delta as a high point by comparison with what was to follow. Her interpretation of historical events remains close to her sources, while that of the human relations shows a more modern sensibility. But, above all, Basil's wars against the Bulgars were, according to Delta's novels, fought for the benefit of Byzantine authority in the Balkans.

Delta's third novel was planned for many years but the writer completed only a part of it. From the notes it appears that she intended to cover the reign of Alexios I and deal with the role of the Crusaders in the campaigns in Asia Minor. She started from Alexios's youth and completed ten chapters, mostly on Romanos Diogenes's times. With regard to the gradual process of Islamization in Asia Minor, the Battle of Manzikert (1071) and the failure of

[8] A detailed account of Delta's intertextual relationship to Schlumberger apears in M. Spanaki, 'Byzantium and Modern Greece (1800–1924). Writing from History and P. S. Delta's novels' (dissertation, Birmingham, 1993). For Delta's correspondence with the French scholar see X. Lefkoparidis (ed.), *Lettres de deux amis. Une correspondence entre Penelope S. Delta et Gustave Schlumberger suivie de quelques lettres de Gabriel Millet* (1962), 39, 41, 43–4, 167–8, 171–4.

[9] Michael Psellos, *Chronographie*, ed. E. Renault (Paris, 1926), 22–3.

the Emperor Romanos are presented in such a way as to demonstrate that intrigues in the palace and bureaucrats with no overall state vision were responsible for the decline of imperial power in the region. The title of the novel in fact comes from a phrase of Karl Krumbacher, 'the collapse of the Byzantine empire'.[10]

Delta stopped working on this novel after 1924. Although she claimed that she had to stop partly because she found it difficult to read the sources in Byzantine Greek, she had other reasons too. As I worked with archive materials I was able to see that she had already gathered substantial information by 1922. In my view, *The Collapse* was never completed because of the Asia Minor Disaster (and indeed Venizelos's fall from power). Had Delta published it, the novel would have been read – with painfully topical content – as the origins, the history and the background to the gradual Islamization of Asia Minor. Delta was shocked by the refugees' condition and felt unable to finish a novel with a plot developing towards the role of the Crusades in the collapse of the Byzantine Empire, the unhelpful attitudes of the Byzantine court, and Alexios's efforts to resist enemy forces. She preferred instead to concentrate on collecting information from politicians and army officers who had taken an active part in various events of her times.

Nevertheless, Delta's two other Byzantine novels became immensely popular and were widely read through the century, generating a widespread awareness of the connection of Byzantium to the Greek identity. Today some of the attitudes of her texts, and particularly the assumption of the superiority of Greeks to other peoples, can be attributed on the one hand to the rising nationalism of the early twentieth century and on the other to Byzantine sources themselves, with their notions of Byzantine supremacy and accounts of the successful military campaigns of the Byzantine emperors.

Maro Douka's novel *A Cap of Purple* was at once a best-seller.[11] Born in 1947 in Chania, Douka studied archaeology at the University of Athens.[12] Her novels are mostly concerned with social issues and contemporary Greece, but her interest in exploring the recent turbulent course of modern Greek history led her this time, like a number of other contemporary novelists, to Byzantium. Since the writer was associated with the Left, however, it came as a surprise to many that she had decided to turn to Byzantium, a period

[10] Delta used the Greek translation: K. Krumbacher, tr. G. Sotiriadis, *Istoria tis Vyzantinis Logotechnias* (1900), 3.420.

[11] In recent years women writers have produced many best-sellers in Greece. It is also thought that the number of women readers of novels is probably higher than that of men.

[12] Douka's novel *I Archaia Skouria* (1979) is now available in English as *Fool's Gold* , tr. R. Beaton (Athens, 1991).

often perceived as dark and oppressive by intellectuals of the Greek Left. Byzantine history is connected to imperial ideology, and historians of the Left have frequently been critical of what they have termed feudalism in Byzantium. It took several years for the writers of the Left to be willing to look at a historical period so strongly linked with Orthodoxy, especially as this meant overcoming the notion of Helleno-Christian civilization propagated by the military dictatorship of 1967–74. With interest rising in the study of the Byzantine past, through the efforts of many scholars, among them Nikos Svoronos (of the Left himself), further attention came to be paid to this historical period in Greece. The proliferation of studies on Byzantium in Greek, and more recently the translation of Byzantine sources into modern Greek (see Panagiotis A. Agapitos's paper in the present volume – Chapter 6) attracted attention and facilitated wider access to primary sources.

This new interest in Byzantium found expression in Douka's novel. She was already working on her book when another woman writer, Rhea Galanaki, received a good deal of critical attention for *The Life of Ismail Ferik Pasha* a fictionalized biography set in the Ottoman past and also a best seller. The time was ripe for going further back in history, especially to periods considered larger than life by the general public. When Douka was interviewed in April 1995 by the newspaper *Ta Nea*, she argued that she chose to work with materials relevant to the historical past, since she found it more and more difficult to come to terms with our own times, and she expressed her anguish over the rapid changes in Greek society.[13] Her views on turning her back on the present and looking to the past as a novelist were further elaborated in another interview published in December 1995. There she claims that political history, military actions and power relationships could be seen in all historical periods, and she attempts to understand the mechanisms of history by looking for the effects that the passions of individuals have on the historical process. With regard to Byzantium and the Great Idea, and the relevance of the Byzantine period to our times more generally, she remarks:

> The Great Idea distorted and greatly misrepresented Byzantium. As far as I am concerned, Byzantium, our own medieval era, was above all a multiethnic empire. But the more it shrunk, and this process began almost in the times of the Comnenes, the more it tended to be transformed into a Greek one, not only with regard to the language, as this had happened a long time previously, but as far as the emergence of the national consciousness of those people is concerned, based on ideas and values of ancient Greek civilization. A civilization which had managed to nurture Christianity. So we today, whether we like it or not, are the descendants of the subjects of that multiethnic empire, which at the moment of its dying out was feeling itself to be Greek. Consequently, Byzantium could be of relevance to our times only to the degree it could help us better to understand our fate in the southern Balkans. It would do us good not to forget that since the decline of the city-state and for thousands of years thereafter we were merely the subjects of multiethnic empires. As a state of clearly defined and pure Greeks, we have completed not even two hundred years of political existence. For this reason we should be neither excessively proud not superficial. As things are, the Capodistriases, Trikoupises and Venizeloses seem to be over as far as we are concerned.[14]

[13] Interview with Mikella Chartoulari, *Ta Nea*, 17 April 1995, 36.

In the light of the above, Douka's novel may also represent in its way the renewal of interest in Byzantium in Greece. Without disputing the Greek character of Byzantium, she emphasizes its multi-ethnicity, in the light perhaps of recent Balkan developments. It could be argued that Douka sees Byzantium as a model for resolving Balkan ethnic conflicts. It is interesting to note that in a 1995 survey of books read by popular personalities in Greece, the singer Eleftheria Arvanitaki said that she was reading Douka's novel in order to get to know this historical period and understand its spirit. This suggests that the public may specifically be turning to historical novels in order to reflect on the national past.

Douka has tried to see the importance of historical individuals, the role of powerful figures, emperors and others, in history. Interestingly enough, Maria Damanaki, a left-wing politician also of the Polytechnic generation, has also expressed her views on the importance of historical exploration, albeit for a more recent period.[15] Byzantium became the medium for Douka to express her concerns and a wish to see what she calls 'more experience deriving from history and greater understanding'.

Douka deals with Alexios I and others of his time, with well-known historical figures who are familiar also in the literary tradition, such as Anna Dalassene and Anna Comnena, who were both the subjects of poems by Cavafy.[16] We shall now turn to the novel and briefly examine some of its main themes.

[14] Interview in *Diavazo*, 358.

[15] M. Damanaki, *To thilyko prosopo tis exousias* (1996).

[16] For the novel's intertextual relationships with the *Alexiad* see for example the following passages in *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena*, tr. E. R. A. Sewter (1969): for Alexios's repentance, III, 115, cf. pp. 85–7; for Sgouritzes, V. 158, cf. pp. 40, 290; for Gaita, I, 66, IV, 147, cf. p. 387. It is also worth noting that Cavafy's depiction of Alexios's trust in his mother for running the affairs of state during his absence is followed by Douka. See C. P. Cavafy, *Poiimata (1919–1933)*, ed. G. P. Savidis (1980), 56 and Douka, 93, 390. Douka also follows Cavafy's choice of material from the *Alexiad* to depict the late years of Anna Comnena, her sorrows and disappointment at losing the throne to her brother John II. See Tatikios's discussions with Theodotos and especially his description of Anna's state of mind and aged body. (See Cavafy, *Poiimata*, 20 and Douka, 361, 420–42, 502, 504. (For Cavafy's poem on Manuel Komnenos, see Anthony Hirst's paper in the present volume – Chapter 9.)

It took the writer five years to write the novel and its narrator four to write his memoirs. The narrative is the product of many years of reflection on the part of Theodotos, a palace eunuch. In his position he has had immediate access to the women's quarters, and has thus been close to their views and activities.[17] He prefers, however, to give his account as if from the point of view of Tatikios, a military figure and a companion to Alexios I. Tatikios follows Alexios on campaign and knows a good deal about his life, thus possessing the status of an eyewitness for historiographical purposes: his account guarantees a degree of authenticity to all events narrated. As we learn from the epilogue, Theodotos and Tatikios have been involved in Comnene family disputes, have taken sides with and protected vital interests of their masters. Both men suffer the consequences but eventually achieve a reconciliation in their old age, when Tatikios approaches Theodotos on behalf of Anna Comnena and requests further revelations concerning the rise to the throne of her brother. In the course of the narrative, we read that Theodotos was protected by Anna Dalassene and was one of her most trusted and faithful servants: it was he who was involved in poisoning Konstantinos Doukas, to whom Anna was betrothed. In his old age, Theodotos writes the memoir with the intention of handing it to Alexios's grandson. The text is thus designed as an instructive one; whenever the narrator addresses the descendant of Alexios, he also offers general advice based on the experience gained from the previous description of Alexios's deeds. Theodotos seeks to establish the way in which these factors have influenced his personal development. The narrative often runs like an interior monologue, and the use of an informal mode of expression heightens the personal colour of the text. Theodotos, who lived deep in the shadows of the palace, reviews his life through the narratives of Alexios's and Tatikios's lives; the introspective parts of the narrative are intensified by several of Theodotos's dreams. The epilogue reveals that Theodotos and Tatikios have now reached the point at which, after lifelong rivalry, they are reluctant ever to pledge allegiance to any particular group again.

Douka sets her fiction against a backdrop of firm fact, with frequent explicit references to various members of the Comnene family and their circles, as well as to particular events such as the First Crusade. These references establish a firm connection between the fictional narrative and

[17] For the identity of the narrator see Douka, 482, 488. For the addressee of the narrative see Douka, 511: the parenthesis underneath Alexios (d. 1192), the son of John II (1118–43), reveals that he is the one for whom Theodotos wrote his account in order to inform him about his grandfather's reign. For the *strategos* Tatikios as a Tourkopoulos see A. G. C. Savvides, 'Late Byzantine and Western historiographers on Turkish mercenaries in Greek and Latin armies: the Turcoples/Tourkopouloi', in R. Beaton and C. Roueché (eds), *The Making of Byzantine History* (Aldershot, 1993) 127–30.

the historiographic information. The novelistic time covers the years from 1025, the year of the death of Basil II, to 1124, and its principal source is the *Alexiad* of Anna Comnena.

The title of the novel is related to the beginning of the story. Alexios lies dead with a purple-dyed nightcap on his head, but none of his relatives cares about his death. All matters relating to the succession are presented through the family relationships between the various houses, with emphasis on the background between the Comnenes and the Doukai.[18] In particular, the role of women inside and outside the palace is carefully examined: several pages are devoted to Anna Dalassene, who is revealed to have interfered on many occasions for the benefit of the dynasty. Family intrigues have been such that no one trusts anyone, and this made Alexios prefer camp life. According to the narrator, history is a source of instruction, and in the future people who examine the past and consult the archives will surprised at just how much was lost by the Byzantines.[19] With regard to Alexios's campaigns, the narrator maintains that they were all in defence of Byzantine territory. However, the campaigns against the Turks came too late: military action should have been contemplated at an earlier stage, before the Turkish groups got a foothold in most regions of Asia Minor. The time for action was that of Romanos Diogenes and the opportunity was lost for ever. Psellos and the intellectual bureaucrats are negatively commented on, and the role of the emperor as a leader of the army and field commander is clearly emphasized. The novel covers all the major campaigns undertaken by Alexios, who is commented on as follows: 'Had Alexios not been a great diplomat, fifteen years after his rise to the throne, the empire would have fallen in the hands of the Latins.'[20] Furthermore, the arrival of the Crusaders is examined, with denunciations of their greed and breaches of promise. Although agreements with the Turks were mostly kept in good faith, this was not possible with the Crusaders, and it was this that led to the gradual decline of Byzantine imperial power. At the same time, the Crusaders' presence made the Christian populations aware of their differences with the Islamic populations, as the following two passages bring out:

> Despite the fact that the Latins were more barbarian than all the barbarians, and despite the fact that they used to burn down the towns they conquered,

[18] For women see Douka, 395, for Dalassene, 128, 134, 158–62, 166–7, 378, 432; for Anna Comnena see 284–5, 292–3, 320, 356, 363, 388–90, 395, 404. In recent years we have witnessed the development of the study of the role of Byzantine women in history; see especially J. Herrin, 'In search of Byzantine women: three avenues of approach' in A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt (eds), *Women in Antiquity* (1983), 167–90, and L. James (ed.), *Women, Men, and Eunuchs. Gender in Byzantium* (1997).

[19] Douka, 116.

[20] Douka, 313.

> the presence of their troops in Asia Minor had alarmed us against those of another religion.
>
> The Turks always knew to respect and honour those who deserved it. And I do not simply mention this but lay special emphasis on this point so that you may realize that this was contrary to what was the practice of the Franks and all others from the West, the envious ones. The latter in their deep-rooted malice never came to recognize any instance of superiority in their enemies or were able to see any of it in their desperate efforts.'[21]

Eventually, the Turks were mobilized in the region and reached Abydos and Adramyttion, burning everything on the way and capturing many women and children. In the opinion of the narrator, however, Turks and Christians were capable of living together, and Alexios made some such arrangements of specific areas with the sultan of Iconium: 'There were moments when he took the whole of history on his shoulders. He was one of the best emperors, very similar to the Bulgar-Slayer, whose steps he followed on campaign.'[22]

The two major women figures of the novel, Alexios's mother and his daughter Anna, exercise their powers in the palace.[23] Anna Dalassene sums up her Greekness by saying that 'one is not born a Roman but becomes a Greek. You become Greek in voice and Orthodox in faith.'[24] Anna Comnena is described as a talented, able but unfortunate woman, whose sex alone prevented her from becoming empress. The narrator notes an incident in which a dying nightingale speaks in a human voice to Anna, saying that she was born in order to be glorified through her sufferings. Military actions, dreams, prejudices, and the loss of loved ones become themes developed in the course of the narrative.There is also a strong sense of futility: 'We fight and we kill each other. What if someone who dreams of us suddenly wakes up and everything vanishes at once?'[26] This possibility, that people act in vain and at the will of others, is further explored when, after years of antipathy and distance, Theodotos and Tatikios meet to discover that their masters have used them for many years for their own purposes by telling them different versions of reality and have turned them against each other in order to protect their own secrets. Dalassene, Anna Comnena, John II and Bryennios have made their own arrangements in secret and left them to pick up the pieces, thinking that in this way they could put their enemies on the

[21] Douka, 281 and 444 ; for the Latins see 117, 278, 301, 307, 313, 315, 319–26, 340, 343, 385, 405; for the Turks see 90, 91, 180, 305, 324, 329, 343, 434, 471, 473.

[22] Douka, 386, 471.

[23] For Alexios's reign see P. Magdalino, ' Innovations in government' in M. Mullett and D. Smythe (eds), *Alexios I Komnenos*, I (Belfast, 1996), 146–66.

[24] Douka, 224.

[25] Douka, 382.

[26] Douka, 481.

wrong track. Douka has said that reading the *Alexiad* she tried to read between the lines, and she projects in the imaginative parts of her novel something of our time. Timeless human passions and the way they determine the course of history were, she claims, the main focus of her novel.

In broader terms, Douka, without even knowing it (she recently claimed that she had not even read *The Collapse*), continues Delta's legacy with regard to the role of Alexios Komnenos and the differences between bureaucrats and soldiers in their respective contribution to state affairs. Delta's and Douka's stories are both tales of valour, and like their Byzantine sources show violence and killing as means to establish regional control in specific geographical areas. More particularly, Douka focuses on kinship relations and the role of relatives in the political process, as well as on resources of solidarity and loyalty.

In the modern Greek historical novel of Byzantium medieval warfare and its implications for the empire are of great importance. War, ambition, crimes and intrigues and the defence of the faith in the interests of the Byzantine state are key themes not only in Delta's and Douka's narratives but also in every twentieth-century Greek novel using Byzantine sources. Thus historical fiction provides a useful subject for the study of the ways in which the remote past can gain mythical significance, confirming beliefs and attitudes or highlighting fears and hopes emerging from the historical circumstances of modern Greek society. Writers interpret their sources according to different models of historical understanding. Rereadings and reappraisals are common in the realm of scholarship and certain texts and historical periods attract more attention than others. For almost a century now the Comnene period and *Digenes Akrites* have been considered focal points for the development of the modern Greek world and its national language; what we witness in Greece today is indeed an emphasis on language as the key site of history. Delta's novels manifested the writing of history in demotic and promoted an alternative curriculum of cultural nationalization long before the Greek state made the demotic the standard language (1976). Douka too writes in a period with a concern for the state of the Greek language and Greece's problems with its neighbours. In the work of these two women writers we can see both old models of cultural nationalism, posited on the link between language, history and nationhood, and, in Douka's case, such models coexisting with new models of language and the nation. All four novels discussed here may be seen as functioning as forms of popular historiography at times of crisis. Delta wrote her novels close to the time of the Macedonian struggle and the First World War, and Douka at a time of rapid change in Greek society and growing concern over its neighbours. Douka is keen to point out that Byzantium, albeit Greek in terms of language and culture, was a multiethnic empire. And if the Byzantines are called Greeks by Delta, following Schlumberger, Douka calls them Romans, just as Anna Comnena does. Both

writers, however, have considered it necessary to emphasize the importance of the Byzantine tradition to the Greek identity of their own times.

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11

'Our glorious Byzantinism': Papatzonis, Seferis, and the rehabilitation of Byzantium in postwar Greek poetry

Roderick Beaton

In the Greek literature of the 1930s, the Byzantine heritage is almost entirely elbowed aside by the dominant western-orientated agenda of that time. By contrast, in the decades after the Second World War, many of the same writers pay belated and productive homage to Byzantium.[1] This is not just a matter of a writer's choice of themes. What gives the topic a place in this volume of essays, I believe, is the role that Byzantium comes to play in the construction of Hellenism in the 1950s, and particularly of the way in which the Greek artistic and cultural tradition comes to be perceived at that time. This postwar role for Byzantium in Greek literature is the more striking by comparison with its almost total neglect (often by the same writers) during the interwar period.

Since this is a large subject, I shall attempt to illustrate it mainly from the example of Seferis, surely the most influential of all the writers of the so-called Generation of the Thirties. It is well known that Seferis's systematic interest, in his poetry, in what Katerina Krikos-Davis has called 'medieval themes' begins only in the collection *Logbook III*, dedicated to the people of Cyprus and published in 1955.[2] Only there do we find, in Seferis, the attempt at a synthesis of the ancient, medieval and modern phases of

[1] This phrase, appropriately enough, served as the title for the first study in English of the work of Nikos Gabriel Pentzikis: G. Thaniel, *Homage to Byzantium* (Minneapolis, 1983). For a sample of Pentzikis's work, see the final contribution to this volume (Chapter 14).

[2] For all references to Seferis's poetry see (in English), G. Seferis, *Complete Poems*, tr. E. Keeley and P. Sherrard (1995) and (in Greek), *Poiimata* (8th or later edition; 1972 onwards). There is a substantial bibliography on Seferis's 'Cyprus' poems contained in the collection *Logbook III*. For 'medieval themes' see K. Krikos-Davis, *Kolokes: A Study of George Seferis' Logbook III (1953–1955)* (Amsterdam, 1994).

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Hellenism, along the lines first explored by Palamas half a century earlier.[3] But Elytis too, after the pagan, sun-worshipping period of his prewar poetry, famously discovered the Byzantine liturgical tradition and made productive use of it in his long poem published in 1959, *To Axion Esti*.[4] Among prose writers, the eastward turn of Giorgos Theotokas, once the prophet of western values in Greek literature, can be quite precisely located in that writer's career, in the mid 1950s, between the first and second volumes of his novel of the Second World War, *Invalids and Wayfarers*. And the most allegedly 'Byzantine' of all modern Greek authors, Nikos Gabriel Pentzikis, develops no less radically from his first novel of extravagantly modern student life in Strasbourg to the elaborate recuperation of parts of the Byzantine tradition for which his later poetry and novels, such as *The Novel of Mrs Ersi* (1966), have been so much admired.[5]

A symptom, and in the case of Seferis at least, also a contributory cause, of the belated discovery of Byzantium among writers of this generation is undoubtedly the essay by the poet Takis Papatzonis, which appeared in two parts, in April and May 1948, in the journal *Nea Estia*. Its title, 'Our glorious Byzantinism', alludes to a notoriously ambiguous line by Cavafy, in the poem 'In Church'.[6] Without irony, and without any hint that Cavafy's line may itself demand to be read ironically, as later readers have proposed, Papatzonis launches into a polemical redefinition of the Greek tradition. Much of the article, particularly its earlier part, is turgid and unfocused, which may be one reason that its importance (not just for Seferis) has been relatively overlooked. But the case that Papatzonis makes is this.

The models on which the modern Greek identity has been forged since 1821 are overwhelmingly foreign ones. All worthwhile writers and artists, and not just of the present generation, have attempted in their work to 'bind themselves to' some part (only) of the Greek tradition.[7] But the result is to cut

[3] Against this traditional view of Palamas see Anthony Hirst's contribution to the present volume (Chapter 9).

[4] See (in English), O. Elytis, *The Collected Poems of Odysseus Elytis*, tr. J. Carson and N. Sarris (Baltimore, 1997); (in Greek), *Prosanatolismoi* (1940); *To Axion Esti* (1959); M. Vitti, *Odisseas Elytis: kritiki meleti* (1984). Of particular interest is Elytis's essay on Romanos, written in 1975 and first published in 1986: see Elytis, *En lefko* ([1992], 33–56).

[5] See R. Beaton, *An Introduction to Modern Greek Literature* (Oxford, 1994), 240, 256; 259–61, respectively.

[6] T. K. Papatzonis, 'O endoxos mas vyzantinismos', *Nea Estia*, 43, (499), (1948), 462–8; (501), (1948), 659–65. For Cavafy's poem see *Poiimata* (ed. G. P. Savidis; revd edn 1991), I, 52, and Anthony Hirst's contribution to the present volume. My literal rendering of *vyzantinismos*, in my title and throughout this chapter, although understandably not favoured by translators of Cavafy, is intended to preserve the ambiguity inherent in the Greek term. Precisely how this term may have been understood by Cavafy, Papatzonis, Seferis or other readers is an intriguing question which lies beyond the scope of this paper.

[7] Papatsonis, 'Vyzantinismos', 468.

off contemporary Greece from its true tradition, in all its extent. Seferis, Elytis and Gatsos, all three described as 'foreign-inspired poets',[8] are accused of doing this, and contrasted unfavourably with a group of so-called 'heretics', who do not. The names of the 'heretics' make interesting reading today: Kalvos, Papadiamantis, Cavafy, Embirikos, Engonopoulos, Matsas and ('perhaps') also Christomanos and Rodokanakis.[9] In place of the highly selective, limited and limiting view of the Greek tradition that he identifies with Seferis's admiration for *Erotokritos* and Makrygiannis, Papatzonis proposes that 'our immediate tradition is the Byzantine world, but the true and entire Byzantine world and not at all just a single phase of it, arbitrarily taken and cut off from its tree'.[10] And the soul of this tradition he unsurprisingly goes on to identify in the Church and in the *religious* traditions of the Greek people.

Seferis's immediate reaction to this essay took the form of a furious exchange of letters with Papatzonis during the summer and autumn of 1948. Papatzonis was by this time a friend and (as I have argued elsewhere) a creative presence in the formation of the poem 'Thrush'.[11] In 1939 the two civil servants, Seferis and Papatzonis, had travelled together to Romania, where they had joked about the 'Moldo-Wallachian horse' which did not, after Jean Cocteau, say M.E.R.D.E.: the subject of two light-hearted poems by Seferis published posthumously.[12] The letters, which remain unpublished, are in the Seferis archive in the Gennadius Library, Athens, together with Seferis's heavily marked copy of the pages of *Nea Estia*.[13] Another copy exists as a set of enclosures in the substantial correspondence between Seferis and Katsimbalis, which was prepared for publication by George Savidis some years ago but has not yet appeared.[14]

Seferis's response to Papatzonis carries all the hallmarks of the prickly, irascible persona that we know from much of Seferis's published correspondence, notably with Timos Malanos. But, although he takes Papatzonis to task in the detail of his argument, and accuses him of using 'uncivilized means' of expressing himself, Seferis even in 1948 does not repudiate the main thrust of his fellow poet's case.

[8] Ibid., 660.

[9] Ibid., 662.

[10] Ibid., 662.

[11] R. Beaton, 'Aphrodite at war: the wartime poetry of Embirikos, Kaknavatos, Papatsonis and Seferis', in P. Mackridge (ed.), *Ancient Greek Myth in Modern Greek Poetry* (1996), 131–8 (135–7).

[12] Seferis, *Tetradio Gymnasmaton II* (ed. G. P. Savidis, 1976), 70–73. For elucidation of the allusions of these two poems see Savidis's notes, pp. 157–8 and Seferis, *Meres III, 1934–1940* (1977), 120–23.

[13] Section IV, file 43.

[14] My thanks are due to the late Professor Savidis for permission to read and take notes from the edited typescript of this correspondence.

More interesting, for our purposes, than the details of the quarrel with Papatzonis (which was soon patched up) is Seferis's intellectual journey of the next two years. These were the years when Seferis was serving at the embassy in Ankara – in the heartland, that is, of Byzantium. And although that period of Seferis's life produced no more than a handful of poems (of which only two, the 'Memory' poems of *Logbook III*, were published in his lifetime), there are good reasons for suggesting that his experience, and particularly his travels, in Anatolia were scarcely less formative of his later poetry and essays than his more conspicuously commemorated visits to Cyprus.

The journals and letters of the period 1948–50 contain several references to a willed attempt by Seferis, since he finds himself in the Byzantine heartland, to come to terms with that part of the historical and cultural experience of Hellenism.

From Prousa (Bursa) in May 1949 he writes to Zissimos Lorenzatos: 'I have very much in mind the fluctuations and the obliteration of the power of Caesar ... There is nothing more melancholy than an expended power ...'[15] Then in September he thanks Katsimbalis for sending reading matter to him in Ankara, including the hymnography of Trembelas:

> The Byzantine things are useful: now that I'm here and can look at them – I'm only sorry that I left behind in Athens Krumbacher's *History of Byzantine Literature*. I'm trying to look, so far as I can without prejudice, at Byzantium. I'm taking things carefully.[16]

Three days after this letter, Seferis set out from Ankara for Constantinople, where he spent almost a month. During that time, as we know from his diary, he visited several of the Byzantine sites of the city, notably the Studite and Chora monasteries, and the ruins of the Vlachernai palace which, in its state of neglect, he describes as 'a landscape of despair'.[17] During that same visit he writes again to Lorenzatos (6 October 1949): 'I'm trying to comprehend Byzantium. Very different when one looks at it from Athens.'[18]

Finally, back in Ankara, later in the same month, he writes to Katsimbalis that his visit has given him the taste for rereading Papadiamantis, but unfortunately all he has with him in Turkey of Papadiamantis is Katsimbalis's bibliography! He goes on:

> I think that the two Byzantines we possess [i.e. in modern Greek literature] are [Papadiamantis] and Cavafy. Cavafy certainly, [Papadiamantis] I'm not sure to what extent. Palamas isn't Byzantine, – I'm preoccupied, as you see, with the problem of Byzantium, not our glorious etc. [the allusion is to Papatzonis's article] but that strange phenomenon - the mingling, the mire, the synthesis.[19]

[15] *Grammata Seferi-Lorenzatou (1948–1968)*, ed. N. D. Triantafyllopoulos (1990), 60–61.
[16] Unpublished letter to George C. Katsimbalis, 15 September 1949.
[17] Seferis, *Meres V, 1945–1951* (1973), 146.
[18] *Grammata Seferi-Lorenzatou*, 89–90.

The climax of this rapprochement with Byzantium came in 1950, at the end of a summer in which, for the first time, Seferis had the opportunity to travel widely in Anatolia. At the end of June 1950, he toured the Aegean coast of Turkey by car, in a fortnight covering almost three thousand kilometres, and taking in his first visit to Ephesus and his return to the home of his childhood summers at Skala tou Vourla (Urla Iskelesi) outside Smyrna. Then, the following month, in mid-July, came the three-day visit to the rock monasteries of Cappadocia, of which his diary account was published three years later by the French Institute in Athens.[20] In limbo between diplomatic postings for more than six months, he and his wife Maro, having given up their flat in Ankara, spent another month in Constantinople, and it was there, at least a month after the visit to Cappadocia, that Seferis began writing the account that he later published. It may be an interesting reflection on the way Seferis worked as a diarist that these pages from a diary of a visit in July were written, with great effort, between September and November.[21] This point is worth emphasizing because the text in which Seferis's rapprochement with Byzantium reaches its most developed form, 'Three Days in the Rock Monasteries of Cappadocia', was something that he worked over quite intensively in Constantinople at the *end* of the summer of 1950. In this work Seferis most fully comes to terms, not only with the Byzantine heritage of Hellenism, but also with the Cavafian 'glorious Byzantinism' of Papatzonis. It is in this diary, which is also, in the manner of Seferis, an essay, that he most fully articulates the new understanding of Hellenism that will underpin the last phase of his poetry and of the intellectual development of his essays.

The most interesting parts of this text for an understanding of Seferis's *rapprochement* with Byzantium are not, it may be suggested, the accounts, vivid though they are, of what he saw in Cappadocia. Unsurprisingly, the 'vernacular' art of the monasteries Seferis has no difficulty in linking to the popular tradition of Digenes Akrites, a Cappadocian hero, and to the same 'unlettered' tradition, overlaid but never quite extinguished by the dead weight of Byzantine scholasticism, which he had praised in his lecture

[19] Unpublished letter to Katsimbalis, 23 October 1949. Cf. Seferis's comments on Cavafy in *Meres V*, 171–2, dated 'Ankara. October '49–end January '50').
[20] Seferis, 'Treis meres sta petrokommena monastiria tis Kappadokias' in *Dokimes* (4th edn, 1981), II, 57–93; first published as no. 78 in the series of publications of the Institut Français d'Athènes, 1953.
[21] For the circumstances of the writing up of this account, see *Grammata Seferi-Lorenzatou*, 114; *Meres V*, 228.

delivered in Egypt on the occasion of the death of Kostis Palamas.[22] This much might have been expected of the prewar, or at least of the wartime Seferis (who had already, if somewhat grudgingly, discovered new aspects of the Greek tradition in Alexandria and in Palestine). But half-way through his account he digresses to take up, explicitly, the challenge thrown down by Papatzonis. This part of the text is in the form of a meditation, beginning, 'One must live for a period at leisure in these parts ...' The third-person injunction, which is maintained throughout the paragraph that begins with it, echoes the very language of Papatzonis. This same, unspecified 'one' must also, the passage continues,

> have the temperament to see this thing that we call Greek tradition, in motion, where the small and the forgotten can be just as important as the unbending monuments of art. 'Our glorious Byzantinism', about which so much has been heard lately, is not a hieratic, fossilized pattern, nor is it grounds for us to belittle those works that we happen not to like; rather is it an unbroken movement of ideas and different impulses, a fermentation, a process of refinement. In Byzantium, just as in ancient Greece, there are so many things that pass us by, that we think of as utterly alien, because most of us – alas, even now – are in the habit of judging what is Greek by the Athens Academy or Syntagma Square.[23]

This is Seferis's considered reply to Papatzonis, and it is not, in essence, a rejection at all. He rejects (as he had done in the correspondence) Papatzonis's tendency to label friend and foe; but Seferis has responded fully to the plea to regard Byzantium as a complete civilization; to such an extent, indeed, that his succinct comment about the potential strangeness of the Byzantine world closely echoes his more famous remark about the *ancient* heritage: 'more often than not, when we speak about the Greekness of a work of art, we are really speaking about the buildings of the Athens Academy'.[24]

If there is nothing here of the wonder with which Seferis would later, in his writings, confront the 'miracle' of his experiences in Cyprus, there none the less is a recognition of a vital component of the Hellenic heritage to which he was only now, in 1950, ready to give its due.

This recognition is developed still further in the closing pages of the essay, in which the diary form has been almost entirely superseded by the reflective tone of the essay. In these pages, Seferis elaborates on the two traditions (the one popular and vernacular, the other, as he describes it, 'scholastic and superficially idealistic'). The first is represented by the monasteries which are the ostensible subject of the text; the second is immediately recognizable as an object of opprobrium throughout Seferis's writings.

[22] Seferis, 'Kostis Palamas', *Dokimes*, I, 215–27 (first published 1943).
[23] Seferis, *Dokimes*, II, 76.
[24] Seferis, *Dokimes*, II, 101 (first published 1938).

But in these closing pages he pays tribute to the meeting point, in the fourteenth-century 'Palaiologan Renaissance', of the two traditions in the mosaics of the Chora Monastery in Constantinople. These mosaics are somewhat extraneous to the ostensible subject matter of the essay, and are here invested with an importance which one could hardly have anticipated on the basis of Seferis's previous writings and published intellectual interests. 'Hardly', because Seferis had been to the Chora Monastery (Kariye Cami) before. On that occasion (in 1938), he had made only the most laconic record, in his diary, of the mosaics that were later to impress him so deeply. But he had also, arising out of that same visit, written the only one of his poems that before the 1950s could be called in any sense 'Byzantine'. 'The Container of the Uncontainable', whose title is an inscription from the mosaics of the monastery, referring to the mystical nature of the Virgin Mary, is an enigmatic poem in only three lines, published in *Logbook I* (1940) and dated 'Good Friday, 1938'.[25] There is scarcely a hint, in that poem, of the significance that Seferis would later attribute to these mosaics.

To appreciate this significance, it is important to realize that the essay was begun, and laboured over, in Constantinople, and that it represents a distillation of a number of ideas and experiences, of which the visit to Cappadocia turns out to have been no more than the catalyst. The common ground between the 'vernacular' tradition of the unlettered monks of Cappadocia and its meeting point with the 'high' tradition of the capital, as Seferis understood it, is first suggested by the painting of the Nativity in the Church of the Swords:

> Here I thought of the last meeting I had with the unforgettable venerator of the monuments of Orthodoxy, Thomas Whittemore. It was at the Chora Monastery, among the mosaics that he was striving to preserve. We pointed out what a noticeable similarity there is between some of those pictures and the stage-set in a theatre.[26]

Here Seferis touches on a favourite theme of his later writings: the underlying affinity between cultural manifestations of pagan Greece and those of Christian Byzantium and later times.

He returns to the Kariye Cami at the end of the diary–essay on Cappadocia, describing its mosaics with a rare and unequivocally positive aesthetic valuation for a Byzantine work of art: 'they are for me the most beautiful and the most moving that I know'. In these mosaics, Seferis goes on, the two rival traditions, which were the inheritance of the Hellenistic age, come together in 'a perfect balance – the tradition of Solomos and the tradition of Cavafy'.[27]

[25] 'I chora tou achoritou'. This is the translation of the title given by Keeley and Sherrard.
[26] Seferis, *Dokimes*, II, 70; cf. *Meres V*, 146.
[27] Seferis, *Dokimes*, II, 90.

The essay closes with a final diary entry which is dated to Constantinople, and just over a month after the visit to Cappadocia. Once again Seferis juxtaposes the simple prayers inscribed on the walls of the provincial monasteries of Cappadocia, with a cypress tree represented in the Chora mosaics, which, as he puts it, 'plays even now with the breath of the wind'. He comments:

> You think of the consummation of two great traditions in the perfection of a single, unique, new creation; that astonishing phenomenon shown to you in a slender cypress-tree. The thought strikes you that only now, perhaps because you're on your way from the East, are you starting to understand Byzantium.[28]

Thanks to this juxtaposition between the vernacular tradition of Cappadocia with its metropolitan counterpart in the Palaeologan renaissance, Seferis's version of 'Byzantinism' achieves a degree of subtlety and succinct coherence that goes far beyond Papatzonis's rambling essay of 1948. But by the end of the diary-essay on Cappadocia, Seferis has redefined his own relation to the traditions of Hellenism, in terms which derive very closely from those first articulated by Papatzonis. Seferis sees himself, finally, as the inheritor equally of both traditions. Because the synthesis that he sees in the Kariye Cami never took place in Greek *literature*, the conclusion is that:

> the two traditions remained strangers to one another and hostile, as they had always been – for *you* to inherit. It catches you by the throat, to realize that still, today, you are treading a path between [the rock church of] Korama and Metochites' monastery. The way is long.[29]

It is the first, and I believe also the only time, that Seferis defined his own art exclusively with reference to Byzantium.

Despite the importance which Seferis attached to it (in this essay only, and, briefly, in his diary at the time),[30] the conception of Byzantium with which Seferis worked in his later poems and essays developed into one more fluid either than Papatzonis had demanded or than he himself had worked out here. A hint of a possible direction in which Seferis's 'Byzantinism' *could* have developed from this point comes in a letter written that year to Zissimos Lorenzatos, a younger man whose own profound interest in the religious tradition of Orthodoxy has subsequently proved influential. Seferis writes, in November 1950, at a time when the question of his next posting is still, after almost a year, unresolved:

[28] Ibid., 92-3.
[29] Ibid., 93.
[30] *Meres V*, 228.

> I've got into the habit of murmuring aloud the names of great cities that have gone under. Truly, deep down, Constantinople would have been a solution for me; it would have given me at least the scope to come to terms with the idea of Byzantium, or more exactly, *of Hellenism in Byzantium*; and that would have brought me closer to my own illumination [my emphasis].[31]

There is a revealing suggestion here of how much the intellectual odyssey of Seferis the poet may have been, even consciously, dependent on the vagaries of the service for which he worked. Had his professional life taken a different course from the one that in fact it did, it is fascinating if fruitless to speculate what *Logbook III* might have contained, apart from the two 'Memory' poems of 1950. But more usefully here, this statement clearly adumbrates two essential components of Seferis's subsequent poetry and thinking on the subject of Byzantium.

The first of these is the preoccupation (which dates back at least to the 1938 visit to Constantinople) with the decay of empires. In his diary of that visit, when he first saw the Chora mosaics and described them with none of the reverence of his later account, he had commented on the physical remains of Byzantine civilization, unregarded or even despised, as he saw them, in the midst of a thriving but alien Turkish city life. These Byzantine relics, as he describes them, appear very differently from the statues and other, somehow 'cleaner' relics of the ancient world in Seferis's poems and diaries of the interwar period. Returning by sea to Athens, he commented, in the spring of 1938:

> Sense of the duration of corruption that you get from this ageing city, so different from Attica, that seems indifferent to transience, that says, 'Never mind if the world goes to pot, I don't care, I go on for ever.'[32]

And this sentiment does not change in the diaries and letters of his sojourn in Anatolia at the end of the next decade. The other side of the 'perfect balance' or synthesis that he saw in the Kariye Cami was the hostility and neglect towards these monuments on the part of the Turks. The decline that, in a rather Gibbonian way, Seferis seems also to have associated with Byzantine luxury and excess, is still visible as a physical and repelling process before his eyes. The glory of Byzantium, which he celebrated in his essay on Cappadocia, is almost always a *failed* glory. Far more than with its glory, Byzantium is synonymous, for Seferis, in a double sense, with corruption.

The second component of Seferis's *rapprochement* with Byzantium, articulated in the letter to Lorenzatos, performs an essential function in bridging the space between the prewar and postwar Seferis, and indeed between the

[31] *Grammata Seferi-Lorenzatou*, 115.
[32] *Meres III*, 98.

more widespread prewar neglect of Byzantium, and its rehabilitation in the Greek literature of the 1950s and 1960s. This is Seferis's interest in Byzantium as a *component* of a larger Hellenism, and not, for example, the other way around. This view is also implicit throughout Papatzonis's essay, in which Greek writers are chastised for their neglect of vital *phases* of their Hellenic heritage. While perhaps merely self-evident in the context of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Greek literature, this is a perspective on the Byzantine 'heritage' significantly at odds with much that has been preserved for us of Byzantine official culture and self-definition, and it may serve to bring into a focus a significant disjunction between the two halves of this book's title.

Byzantine civilization, both in its history and as an international field of academic study, may be said to *include* medieval Hellenism, but its geographical and cultural boundaries are surely wider still. On the other hand, for Seferis and others of his generation, and indeed for subsequent generations, the significance of that civilization is precisely as a component of the *longue durée* of Hellenism.

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12

Byzantium in contemporary Greece: the Neo-Orthodox current of ideas

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The term 'Neo-Orthodoxy', although in use earlier to designate an influential theological current in Protestantism,[1] has been widely used in Greece since the 1980s. To my knowledge, it was the leftist journal *Scholiastis* (*Commentator*), which no longer appears, which coined this term in 1983 as a negative characterization of the religious quest of some Left intellectuals, men of letters and artists (for example, Stelios Ramfos, Kostas Zouraris, Kostis Moskof, Dionysis Savvopoulos and Nikos Gabriel Pentzikis). These men had shown even before the 1980s, each one in his own way, an unusual degree of interest in the Orthodox tradition and indeed in the spiritual legacy of Athonite monasticism.[2] This was unusual among the traditional Left intelligentsia, which considered Orthodoxy and generally religion as a reactionary element that was bound to disappear in the long run. In this way, the term Neo-Orthodox has become very common, in journalistic and scholarly circles alike.[3] Yet those generally considered to be part of this Neo-Orthodox current never accepted the label, or rather term of opprobrium, and considered that it gave a misleading notion of their purposes and ideals.[4] For the theologian and philosopher Christos Giannaras, for example, the Neo-Orthodox label was similar to the smear-word 'Slavophile' in nineteenth-century Russia. In his view, this 'new wave' in Greece had nothing to

[1] J.R. Hinnels (ed.), *The Penguin Dictionary of Religions* (1984), 230.

[2] *Scholiastis*, 5 (August 1983), 18–19.

[3] For example, M. Lambidis, 'Koinonika stereotypa. O neorthodoxos', *To Vima*, 26 May 1996, 23.

[4] See Ch. Giannaras, *Kritikes paremvaseis* (1987), 72, 125–9, and also the interviews by the Abbot Vasilios Gontikakis in *Orthodoxos Typos*, 1 July 1988, 2, and by K. Zouraris in *Eleftheria* (Larissa), 4 March 1995, 7.

do with a discovery of a new Orthodoxy, but was a rediscovery of a forgotten but authentic Orthodox tradition. It did not, then, represent a mere religious revival, but a real acquaintance with the spiritual legacy of Greek Orthodox civilization, a civilization clearly differentiated from that of the West.[5] For others, it was more an expression of a general pro-Orthodox current, which had been present earlier.[6] The main problem is, however, that Neo-Orthodoxy was in its essence an unofficial and unsystematic endeavour; as a consequence, no clear definition or description of this entire current has yet been provided. Neo-Orthodoxy cannot be reduced to some sort of an Orthodox revival alone, for the latter is a much wider phenomenon represented by such thinkers as John Romanides, Panagiotis Christou, Nikos Nisiotis, Savvas Agourides, John Zizioulas, Nikos Matsoukas and several others, who have made a decisive contribution to the regeneration of Orthodox theology.[7] No doubt there exist some common features in this revival – above all, an Orthodox critique of the West. But this in no wise means that this critique is undifferentiated and unified, nor that its promoters share the same presuppositions.

Since the term Neo-Orthodoxy is now well established, whether right or wrong, it seems pointless to replace it by other terms. It is more useful to outline some basic features characterizing this current of ideas.[8] Neo-Orthodoxy, which has been compared to a liberation theology in Greek style,[9] can be best described by its connection with some important events of the early 1980s: an unofficial dialogue between Orthodoxy (as differentiated from Western Christianity) and Marxism/Communism;[10] a tract from the Holy Community of Mount Athos concerning the education of the Greek

[5] Giannaras, *To keno stin trechousa politiki* (1989), 108–14.

[6] P. Nikolopoulos, 'To "filorthodoxo" revma. Apologismos kai prooptikes', *Synaxi*, 29 (1989), 47–50.

[7] Y. Spiteris, *La teologia ortodossa neo-greca* (Bologna, 1992), examines Romanides, misleadingly, as part of the Neo-Orthodox current; see the review by G. Metallinos, *Theologia*, 66 (1995) 852–7.

[8] Giannaras (*Kritikes paremvaseis*, 72) speaks of a handful of people as having initiated this current. For general information, see V. Xydias, '"New" or "Old": Orthodoxy in the limelight', *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*, 11 (1984), 69–72; C. Mesoniat, 'Le mouvement "néo-orthodoxe" en Grèce', *Contacts*, 36 (1984), 331–40; V. N. Makrides, 'Neoorthodoxie – eine religiöse Intellektuellenströmung im heutigen Griechenland' in P. Antes and D. Pahnke (eds), *Die Religion von Oberschichten. Religion–Profession–Intellektualismus* (Marburg, 1989), 279–89.

[9] O. Clément, 'Orthodox reflections on "Liberation Theology"', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 29 (1985), 63–72 (69–71).

[10] See P. Makris, *Marxistis kai Orthodoxia: Dialogos i diamachi?* (1983); *idem* (ed.), *Orthodoxia kai Marxismos* (1984), rev. J. Touraille, *Contacts*, 36 (1984), 344–9; A. Jevtich, 'Sosialismos kai ekklesiastiki koinotita', *Synaxi*, 9 (1984), 29–33; S. Papathemelis, *Orthodoxia kai politiki* (Thessaloniki, 1986), 57–72; Anthimos Roussas, Bishop of Alexandroupolis, *Ekklisia kai Neos Ellinismos* (Alexandroupolis, 1990), 77–84.

nation;[11] a widespread interest in the Athonite monastic tradition and Orthodox spirituality;[12] the debates concerning Christos Giannaras's election to a chair of philosophy at the Panteion University in Athens, and heated discussions about the relationship between philosophy and theology as well as between Orthodoxy and rationality;[13] the appearance of a new theological journal *Synaxi* (*Gathering*), in which fresh ideas about Orthodoxy were expressed by a variety of theologians and intellectuals. In the cultural field, the decade saw the first publication (1983) of the *Oramata kai thamata* (*Visions and Miracles*) by the War of Independence general Giannis Makrigiannis, a work often felt to be an authentic document of a popular Orthodox ethos.[14] In addition, the popular singer Dionysis Savvopoulos's record *Ta trapezakia exo*, and interviews given by him, emphasized in various ways the importance of the Greek Orthodox tradition.[15] The aforementioned cases reveal various quests in the 1980s for locating the idiosyncrasy of modern Greek identity.[16] Apart from those already mentioned, several other seminal intellectuals were considered as belonging to or associated with the Neo-Orthodox current: the Abbot Vasilios Gontikakis (then of the Stavronikita and now of the Iviron Monastery on Mount Athos);[17] the Abbot Georgios Kapsanis of the Grigoriou Monastery on Mount Athos;[18] the theologian Panagiotis Nellas, the founder and editor of *Synaxi*, and others.[19] During the same period there appeared other positive appreciations of the Byzantine Orthodox tradition of the East by leftist individuals (by, for example, the composers Mikis Theodorakis and Giannis Markopoulos, and the actor Manos Katrakis).

[11] *To Agion Oros kai i paideia tou genous mas* (Mount Athos, 1984). This text, written by the Abbot Vasilios Gontikakis, was criticized by other Orthodox theologians as deviant: see, for example, the critique by the Thessaloniki professors P. K. Christou and Th. N. Zisis, *Orthodoxos Typos*, 26 April 1985, *contra Synaxi*, 8 (1983), 87–92 and 10 (1984), 67–80.

[12] See the works by the Peruvian Hieromonk Symeon, *The Holy Mountain Today* (1983) and *Nifalios Methi* (1985), with his interviews in *To Tetarto*, 9 (January 1986) 65–9 and *Synaxi*, 5 (1983) 44–50.

[13] See Giannaras, *Kritikes paremvaseis*, 53–63, 83–109 and *Ta kath' eafton* (1995), 160–73.

[14] See Z. Lorenzatos, *To tetradio tou Makrygianni (MS 262)* (1984); G. Metallinos, *Orthodoxia kai ellinikotita* (1987), 87–163, *Ellinismos meteoros* (1992), 106–30; S. Gounelas, 'O "agrammatos" Makrygiannis', *Synaxi*, 22 (1987), 45–53; Giannaras, *Orthodoxia kai Dysi sti Neoteri Ellada* (1992), 297–302.

[15] For example, in *Scholiastis*, 6 (September 1983), 23–6; *Synaxi*, 16 (1985), 65–74; *Contacts*, 36 (1984), 341–4; *Erourem* (2nd series), 3 (1995), 141–51.

[16] See, for example, *I idioprosopia tou Neou Ellinismou* (2 vols, Goulandris-Horn Foundation, 1983), with texts by Ramfos, Gontikakis, Giannaras, and others.

[17] See V. Gontikakis, 'Kallos kai isychia stin agioreitiki politeia', *Synaxi*, 49 (1994), 35–9.

[18] See G. Kapsanis, *Orthodoxia kai oumanismos* (Holy Monastery of Grigoriou, Mount Athos, n.d.).

[19] On Nellas and his contribution, see various articles in *Synaxi*, 18 (1986), 5–48; 21 (1987), 9–94; 45 (1993), 113–19; 47 (1993), 21–32; 59 (1996), 98–122.

Neo-Orthodoxy began as a marginal current, which did not have mass appeal except among university students, for example, the EXON (Greek Christian Orthodox Socialist Youth) and its journal *Simadia* (*Signs*).[20] It was neither supported by the official Church nor by the political parties. In fact, some Neo-Orthodox had broken away from the Communist and Socialist parties or continued their efforts from within, but with different objectives.[21] Their influence began to wane in the late 1980s, and the unofficial Orthodox–Marxist dialogue, having borne little fruit, was abandoned even before the collapse of Marxism–Leninism in Eastern Europe.[22] However, owing to the radical changes in the former Eastern bloc after 1989, which contributed to a considerable revival of Orthodoxy, there was a renewed interest in Orthodoxy in Greece in the 1990s. As a result, some Neo-Orthodox thinkers were recruited to a wider Hellenocentric quest for an authentic Greek way of life which might withstand the challenges of the next millennium.

The Neo-Orthodox current of the 1980s was the latest manifestation of a wider Orthodox revival in Greece from the mid-1950s, which was critical towards the previous theological tradition in Greece.[23] This revival exhibited various features and differing orientations (for example, a political–biblical theology and several Neo-Patristic tendencies in Thessaloniki with the edition of the works of Gregory Palamas).[24] In addition, around the end of the 1950s there was a major internal crisis of the pietistic movements, which led to their split, their weakening, and the emergence of a deep spiritual vacuum among the members who left them and intended to

[20] An idea of the wave of interest can be derived from surveying the first eleven issues of *Simadia* (1982–84).

[21] See K. Moskof, 'Enas chronos kommounistikou ki orthodoxou dialogou', *Simadia*, 11 (November 1984), 26; D. Delis, 'Orthodoxo kinima kai Christianomarxistikos dialogos. Simadia antilegomena', *Simadia*, 9 (February 1984), 26–31.

[22] See D. Moschos, 'Istories kathimerinis trelas. Apotimisi Christianomarxistikou dialogou', *Simadia* (2nd series), 1 (15) (January–February 1988) 17–21; V. Xydias, 'Sta ichni enos synedriou', *Synaxi*, 27 (1988), 78–83; also Giannaras, *To keno stin trechousa politiki*, 56–9.

[23] Of key importance here was the doctoral dissertation on Original Sin by the Greek-American John Romanides, who attempted to locate foreign influences on Orthodox theology: see *To propatoriko amartima* (1957, repr. 1989 with a new introduction by the author). For an overview of critiques of the theological tradition, see K. C. Felmy, 'Die orthodoxe Theologie in kritischer Selbstdarstellung', *Kirche im Osten*, 28 (1985), 53–79; also Th. Papathanasiou, 'Provlimata tis theologias stin Ellada to 1989 m.Ch.', *Synaxi*, 29 (1989), 17–32; I. Mastrogiannopoulos, *Theologikes parousies* (1986), 121–8.

[24] For an example of political–biblical theology, see S. Agouridis, 'Vivlikes rizes tis synchronis "Politikis Theologias"', *Kath' Odon*, 7–8 (1994), 19–28. For differing assessments of the theological revival, see P. K. Chrestou, 'Neohellenic theology at the crossroads', *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 28 (1983), 39–54 (54); Th. Zisis, 'I theologia stin Ellada simeron', *Epopteia*, 91 (1984), 581–7; P. Vassiliadis, 'Greek theology in the making. Trends and facts in the 80s – Vision for the 90s', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 35 (1991), 33–52.

accomplish a major breakthrough in the Greek theological scene. Giannaras played a major role with his numerous publications and as editor of the journal *Synoro* (*Frontier*) from 1964 to 1967.[25] A lesser-known but very influential Orthodox thinker was Dimitrios Koutroumbis (1921–83), whose intellectual and spiritual journey, as many Neo-Orthodox thinkers acknowledged, acted as a catalyst for the emergence of a new theological generation in Greece.[26] Instrumental for these changes were also the contributions of the Russian theological diaspora in the West, of foreign converts to Orthodoxy, and of the Patristic revival within the Roman Catholic Church.[27] It is worth noting that the roots of this revival in Greece must also be sought in popular Orthodox tradition and the ethos of Papadiamantis, as also in the quest for *ellinikotita* on the part of artists and thinkers of the generation of the 1930s and later (G. Theotokas, F. Kontoglou and his journal *Kivotos* (*Ark*) of 1952–53, D. Pikionis, N. G. Pentzikis, V. Tatakis, Z. Lorenzatos, G. Tsarouchis) who were critical of the pervasive Western influences on Greek culture.[28] Given this rich and diverse background, the outcome was the formulation of a fresh theological language in close relation to the ascetic and liturgical experience of the Church, away from pietistic *savoir-vivre* and legalistic precepts, and the appearance of some epoch-making theological works in the 1960s and later. Finally, from the same period there was a revival and wider influence of Athonite monasticism, made obvious by the manning of several monasteries by educated spiritual fathers and monks.[29] This regeneration left its imprint not only on academic theology but on the ecclesiastical hierarchy too.[30] Yet there are differences between the Orthodox revival in the 1960s and the Neo-Orthodoxy of the 1980s. Among other things, the

[25] See his autobiography, *Katafygio ideon. Martyria* (1987) and *Orthodoxia kai Dysi*, 348–405.

[26] See a posthumous collection of his articles, with a preface by Abbot Vasilios Gontikakis: *I charis tis theologias* (1995). His influence is attested to in *Synaxi*, 7 (1983), 31–9 and 12 (1984), 72–5, as also by Giannaras, *Katafygio ideon*, esp. pp. 295–312 and *Orthodoxia kai Dysi*, 470–73.

[27] The Russian theological diaspora in the West included G. Florovsky, B. Bobrinskoy, M. Evdokimov, V. Lossky, A. Schmemann and J. Meyendorff; on its influence, see N. Zernov, 'The significance of the Russian Orthodox Diaspora and its effect on the Christian West' in D. Baker (ed.), *The Orthodox Churches and the West* (Oxford, 1976), 307–27; also Giannaras, *Ta kath' eafton*, 87–94, 121–2 and A.-E. Tachiaos, 'Rosiko dialeimma sto Parisi', *Synaxi*, 57 (1996), 81–90. Foreign converts to Orthodoxy have included Timothy Ware, now Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia, and the late Philip Sherrard; Roman Catholic scholars of patristics, J. Daniélou, H. de Lubac and Y. Congar.

[28] For an overview, see Giannaras, *Orthodoxia kai Dysi*, 406–35; 'I ellinokentriki skepsi tou F. Kontoglou', *Kathimerini*, 5 November 1995, 33; and *Ellinotropos politiki* (1996), 30–32. On Kontoglou's legacy, see J. Vivilakis (ed.), *F. Kontoglous en eikoni diaporevomenos. Aphieroma* (1995).

[29] See G. Mantzaridis, 'New statistical data concerning the monks of Mount Athos', *Social Compass*, 22 (1975), 97–106, and *Koinoniologia tou Christianismou* (4th edn, Thessaloniki, 1995), 315–23.

[30] See Giannaras, *Orthodoxia kai Dysi*, 436–83 , and *To keno stin trechousa politiki*, 79–95.

former was more or less confined to the religious–theological domain, while the latter transcended narrow religious boundaries and attracted the attention of those who had previously had little or no interest at all in Orthodoxy.

As far as the points of convergence between Neo-Orthodox thinkers are concerned, it is not easy to locate them because there was never an official Neo-Orthodox programmatic declaration, and there have been differing orientations and opinions – even if hostile critics have sometimes lumped Neo-Orthodox thinkers together indiscriminately.[31] But some common features may be summarized.

Neo-Orthodoxy involves opposition to enthusiastic Westernizers, to reactionary traditionalists and to Orthodox hardliners as well as to uninformed neutrals. The so-called progressive Greek intelligentsia is seen as myopic, incapable of discerning the wealth of Greece's own tradition and heritage and hence bound to perpetuate the disorientation of the country in the contemporary global environment. The Neo-Orthodox, by contrast, view Greek Orthodox history and culture from an inward perspective not based on imported Western historiographical presuppositions. The generally acclaimed 'Greek roots' of Western civilization are seen only as the particular way the West appropriated the ancient Greek heritage. But this way is totally different from the one in which this tradition has been accepted, assimilated and interpreted in the Byzantine Orthodox East.[32]

All of the various Neo-Orthodox thinkers have emphasized the importance of the Orthodox Byzantine tradition for modern Greece, and its differences from the West. It is true that they frequently diverge, in their subjective appreciations of Byzantium in particular, in their attempt to locate the diachronic features of Greekness, but some common points of convergence are still to be found. Leaving to one side many other influential thinkers, notable among them Stelios Ramfos and Kostis Moskof, I shall briefly survey here the ideas of perhaps the two most radical exponents of the Neo-Orthodox current, Christos Giannaras and Kostas Zouraris.

It was Giannaras who initiated more than thirty years ago a systematic effort to find the crucial elements distinguishing the Greek Byzantine from the Western European philosophy and tradition.[33] Central to this project

[31] For the variety of views, see, for example, the review of Ramfos, *Meleti thanatou* in *Synaxi*, 3 (1982), 83–90; for a reaction to hostile criticism, see Giannaras, *Ellinotropos politiki*, 36–41.

[32] See, for example, Ramfos, *Martyria kai gramma. Apologos gia ton Marx kai logos gia ton Kastoriadi* (1984), 20–21; Giannaras, 'Diekdikiseis ellinikotitos', *Kathimerini*, 22 December 1996, 8.

[33] This summary of a highly prolific author's ideas is based especially on the following works: *I eleftheria tou ithous* (2nd edn, 1979), 286–91; *To prosopo kai o eros* (4th edn, 1987), 121–46, 257–81; *Alitheia kai enotita tis Ekklisias* (1977), 91–181; *To pronomio tis apelpisias* (2nd edn, 1983), 229–39; *Alfavitari tis pistis* (7th edn, 1991), 215–43; *Kritikes paremvaseis*, 39–52, 144–6, 191–213; *I neoelliniki taftotita* (3rd edn, 1989), 65–126; *To ken o stin trechousa politik*, 41–6, 66–78; *Elladika proteleftia* (1991), 83–100, 113–30; *Orthodoxia kai Dysi*, esp. 21–87; *Ellinotropos politiki*, 129–31, 171–7; 'I syngeneia Dysis kai Islam', *Kathimerini*, 10 March 1996, 29.

was the significance of the Hesychast controversy in the fourteenth century, which fell into oblivion in Greece until its recent revaluation. Giannaras believes that Orthodoxy, through the social dynamics of the Eucharistic community, formed the communal way of Greek life in Byzantium over a span of a thousand years. Byzantium exhibited major differences from Western medieval societies, which were under the sway of feudalism and of deep class cleavages: such societies, though religious, lacked the Byzantine social and personalistic ethos, and the harmony between humans and the creation manifested in a personalistic cosmology as a way of life. Byzantine presuppositions, then, differed radically from those developed in the West from the late Middle Ages (for example, intellectualism, rationalism, objectivation of truth), with important social consequences (evident, for example, in the differences between Gothic and Byzantine architecture). Byzantium denied the necessity and utility of amorphous, impersonal structures and transformed them into meaningful units within a personalistic framework. Byzantium had at times a strong centralized administration, but no mark of a totalitarian state. There was often great accumulation of wealth, but no capitalism. There was also no feudalism in Byzantium, for feudalism was imported from the West in the Ottoman Empire in the seventeenth century, in the wake of its economic dependence on Western interests and the deterioration of its social structures. There was also no theocracy in Byzantium, because the Orthodox Church did not function as a 'religion', as a package of metaphysical convictions. The Byzantine patriarchs did not try to replace the emperors. By contrast, such a theocratic tradition can be found in the West, especially in the struggles for political power by the popes.

For Giannaras, the essence of Hesychasm lies in the clarification of the Byzantine ontology, the problem of Being. What constitutes the hypostasis of Being, the essence or the person of God? Is God an active essence *par excellence* (*actus purus*, as Aquinas held), or personal otherness and freedom? For the Hesychasts, the person is the presupposition of Being. Existence is not construed on the basis of a given essence or nature, but in the light of the indeterminability of personal self-definition. God exists as the person *par excellence*, and out of His free will He creates the universe, which in turn reveals the Creator; whereas in the West existence was determined by the given essences of God and the world, which becomes thus an autonomous created entity that can be subjected and controlled by man *ad libitum*. Furthermore, at the level of theory of knowledge, for the Hesychasts, the person and its energies can be known in a relational, communal way. Knowledge is seen as an erotic achievement and a self-transcending activity,

not as a subjection of the other (person or object) to the power of individual noetic capacity or to utilitarian needs. Apophatic communal knowledge can never be transformed into an *adaequatio rei et intellectus* and into an objective reality. This was the axis of the whole controversy between the Hesychasts and the Westernizers, whether the knowledge of God is an individual noetic grasping of an abstract highest being or a relational, erotic, personalistic participation and communion with God, as in Hesychast experience. In the Greek Orthodox tradition, from Heraclitus (*sic*) to Gregory Palamas, truth has never been transformed into an object and has never been fully described in words. Truth has been verified through the dynamic way of common experience. Gregory Palamas and the brothers Kabasilas, Neilos and Nicholas, with prophetic intuition, realized the grave future consequences of the theory of knowledge and the ontology of scholastic philosophy, which gave rise to Western civilization. For example, Scholasticism rendered theology an autonomous scientific discipline (*sacra scientia*), subjected to the rules of any other positive science examining, testing, scrutinizing and proving its principles and propositions. Thus, it was clearly dissociated from the Byzantine theology developed within the framework of ecclesiastical and ascetic experience.

Giannaras's interpretation holds that, historically speaking, the Franks in the West after the age of Charlemagne tried systematically to alienate themselves politically and culturally from the Roman Empire of the Greek East. Indeed, they turned the coordinates of ancient Greek and Byzantine civilization upside down. This resulted in a hatred of the Greeks, as at least ten books entitled *Contra errores Graecorum*, written between the ninth and the thirteenth century, clearly show. Among the negative consequences of the schism between East and West in 1054, Giannaras cites the *Dictatus Gregorii Papae*, Scholasticism, the objectivation of truth, utilitarianism, papal primacy, infallibility and *plenitudo potestatis*, the Inquisition and the use of torture as an investigation method, the *Propaganda Fidei*, the Vatican State, obligatory clerical celibacy, and religious and political totalitarianism. From the fourteenth century on there has been, in his view, a wholesale attempt to Westernize the East, which has finally resulted in the destruction of Greek catholicity by Western intellectualism, rationalism and utilitarianism. Giannaras even goes so far as to say that, despite its apparent differences, Western political culture exhibits more similarities in its content and goals to the Islamic tradition than to the authentic and undistorted Greek tradition.

Despite the strong Western influences and the overall disorientation under Ottoman rule, Giannaras maintains that the Greek tradition was retained in the East in various forms, open and latent alike, at the level of the economy and the judicial system as well as in popular customs and traditions). It was manifested in the movement of the Kollyvades in the eighteenth century (for example, Makarios Notaras, Nikodimos Agioreitis,

Athanasios Parios), who were the most faithful adherents of the Orthodox Byzantine tradition, familiar with the Hesychast legacy and with the cultural dynamism of ecclesiastical worship and art. They reacted not only against the Enlightenment and the attempted Westernization of Greece, but also against the currents of nationalism that threatened to destroy the supranational Byzantine Orthodox commonwealth through the foundation of independent national states. Aside from these, the Greek tradition survived under Ottoman rule in the form of micro-societal units, the autonomous village communities, which preserved the Orthodox identity and real solidarity among the flock and which paid equal attention to their spiritual and their material welfare. These communities represented the transformation of the communal ideals of Orthodoxy into reality, social praxis and justice and enabled the cohesiveness and the correlation, but not the differentiation, of the various social strata. Communalism became thereby the way the Greek Romeic nation continued to exist, whose foundations were not rational or economic, but *in nuce* spiritual Orthodox. The Eucharistic community and the parish remained the major permanent archetypes of communal life.

Like Byzantium, in Giannaras's view, modern Greece lies at the crossroads between East and West. It has been influenced by both, but it retains its specificity and otherness. Modern Greeks should not feel inferior to the West because they are in fact equal partners who can contribute to it with a fresh cultural proposition concerning the meaning of existence and life, the right ranking of life's priorities and needs, and the value of communal, social relations. Greece is the land of *Philokalia*, after the name of the well-known florilegium of Orthodox ascetic experience and wisdom. Nevertheless, modern Greeks do not suspect at all that they are heirs to a cultural tradition of unsurpassed achievements. The main problem is the loss of the Romeic Greek identity through an inferiority complex and the unthinking imitation of foreign lifestyles. Only if Greeks accept their otherness – as such important cultural figures as Tsarouchis, Pikionis, Kontoglou, Theotokas, Pentzikis, Tatakis and Lorenzatos have done – can they interact fruitfully with the West. Greeks, due to their long and wealthy heritage, had always had a certain sense of nobleness. But the Helladic state, constructed by the Bavarians and continued by the Westernized political élites, is totally irrelevant to the actual needs, the idiosyncrasy, and the potential of modern Greeks. Here lies the reason that the narrow Helladic state, the most decisive shrinkage of Hellenism in history, is dogged by misfortune. The ideology of Korais which prevailed led the country to an understanding of the ancient Greek past, as understood by the West, with no relation at all to Byzantium.[34] Yet

[34] See especially Alexis Politis's contribution to the present volume (Chapter 1).

the encounter between Hellenism and Christianity, despite their conflicts, gave birth to a new civilization, which survives today in worship, language and popular practices. It is, then, possible to find realistic solutions to contemporary problems by drawing on the time-honoured ways of collective survival of the Greeks. Greek Orthodox culture was traditionally universal in scope and influence with broad horizons and no geographical frontiers.

For Kostas Zouraris – to turn now to our second ideological figure – the diachronic meaning of Greek Orthodoxy is to be located in the apophatic way of reasoning in all domains, from theology to politics.[35] Zouraris has applied his hermeneutic scheme to all periods of Greek history, as portrayed in ancient Greek, Patristic, Byzantine, and modern texts (for example, of Homer, Thucydides, John Chrysostom, Maximus the Confessor, Gregory Palamas, Theodore Kolokotronis, General Makrygiannis, Papadiamantis and Kostas Varnalis) and forms of life (including folk songs and customs). What, for Zouraris, characterizes the Greek Orthodox way of thought in general? In the first place, truth is never objectified in rigid, fixed and unchanged definitions within large systems of thought and programmes, as in the West, but is always defined approximately. Second, the avoidance of definitions has enabled Greeks to develop a special understanding of all possible situations as bipolarities. Third, there is no linear progress of humanity in the real meaning of the word, but a circular motion in which forward movement and immobility coexist. In other words, each new situation is not the absolute solution and overcoming of previous problems, but consists once more of positive and negative aspects. In Zouraris's view, these presuppositions of Greek Orthodox thought helped Greeks to avoid the impasses created by the serious discrepancy between arrogant Western ideas of progress, and their tragic failure in practice. Greek apophatism, complemented by the virtues of discretion, responsibility, and measure in all domains of life, has promoted forbearance and indulgence both in theory and in practice. Instead of trusting in the human potential to create the *civitas Dei* on earth, the Greek Orthodox people have approached differently the salvation of the fallen and moribund human beings and the world.

As far as Byzantium is concerned, Zouraris thinks that it was by far ahead of Western societies at that time. It had a more human face and greater social justice. The abolition of slavery was effected for the first time in

[35] This summary of Zouraris's views is based on the following works: *Misgankeia aperinoiti. Symvoli stin politiki aftognosia tis Elladas* (2nd edn, 1986), esp. 56–60, 191–5, 255–67, 274–96; *Theoeideia parakatiani. Eisagogi stin aporia tis politikis* (2nd edn, 1989; with a preface by Moskof); *Gelas Ellas apofras* (1990), esp. 50–69, 137–241, 311–37; 'Stoicheia methypervatikou politevmatos kata ton Agio Grigorio Palama: "Oligodeia kai Oligoktisia"' in *Orthodoxia-Ellinismos. Poreia stin triti chilietia*, I (Holy Monastery of Koutloumousi, Mount Athos, 1995), 179–90. See also his symbolic fairy tale, *Mesa sto samali i acheiropoiitos* (1993).

Byzantium through the Church. Byzantine civilization was admired by all for its beauty, the *Philokalia* of the empire in every possible domain. The Byzantine way of life was highly balanced, with a deep and harmonious relation between the spiritual–ascetic and the material worlds unlike anything in the schizophrenic Western way of life. In the Orthodox East one may observe holistic beings approaching the world in an integral and balanced manner (so the Orthodox monks), away from the excessive use of human *ratio* and its fragmentary results. The cenobitic tradition is an attempt to live to the full and not merely to survive. The same way of life has been continued by the Greek Orthodox people through Ottoman rule and up to the present. The optimistic way Greek Orthodox people still view the world and enjoy themselves is a crucial sign of this difference, while the West, despite material wealth and consumerism, is far more pessimistic and lacking in an enjoyment of life. For Zouraris, all this may be illuminated with reference to Byzantine thought: examining the work of Nicholas Kabasilas, he finds that this statesman, intellectual and mystic expresses progressive views about authority and power in religious language (on, for example, authority as a philanthropic activity and *diakonia*, about absolute human freedom, and about the democracy of Orthodoxy as an erotic community of love). In addition, Zouraris places particular emphasis on the significance and impact of Hesychast spirituality, which he feels forms the quintessence of Orthodoxy as opposed to Western theology and, he believes, survived after 1453. Zouraris examines, for example, the views of Gregory Palamas on wealth and poverty and finds his proposals fruitful for our postmodern era. It is worth noting here that others too consider the mystical theology of Byzantium to express the very spirit of Orthodoxy and its revolutionary and transformative social power, as manifested in the Zealot rising, with implications for our modern perspective.

The views expressed by Giannaras and Zouraris represent two far-reaching examples, but the Neo-Orthodox understanding of Byzantium generally has exerted certain influences both on contemporary Orthodox theology and more widely in the culture.[36] At the same time, it is also clear that scholars outside the Neo-Orthodox current have expressed very different views concerning the same period. For example, it has been argued that the élitist and otherworldly Byzantine mysticism of the fourteenth century was not revolutionary, as was its Western counterpart; that it in fact lacked mass appeal, and could

[36] See, for example, Ierotheos Vlachos, Bishop of Nafpaktos and Agios Vlasios, *Prosopo kai eleftheria* (Levadeia, 1991); *Orthodoxos kai Dytikos tropos zois* (Levadeia, 1991); *O Agios Grigorios o Palamas os Agioreitis* (1992); *Romioi se Anatoli kai Dysi* (Levadeia, 1993); *Anatolika*, I (2nd edn, Levadeia, 1993), 188–204. See also O. Clément, *Vyzantio kai Christianismos* (tr. Th. Mainas, 1985) and, more generally, Y. Dizikirikis, *Vyzantio kai Dysi. Politistika kai aisthitika zitimata tis zografikis* (1996) and Th. Ziakas, 'I aporia tis politikis', *Synaxi*, 55 (1995) 31–9.

not save the Byzantine Empire from disintegration. For these critics, the fetishization of this particular Byzantine period by certain Neo-Orthodox circles is seen as fallacious and misleading, for it is illusory to believe that it will solve today's problems.[37] Furthermore, scholarly Byzantinists interpret the events of Byzantine history such as the Zealot revolt and the Palamite controversy from a rather different perspective and come to different conclusions: for them the Zealot revolt was not a revolutionary uprising of the 'lower classes' against the aristocracy and did not manage to abolish social injustice and economic inequality. Nicholas Kabasilas had a fierce social conscience and condemned injustice, but his *Treatise Concerning Illegal Acts of Officials Against Things Sacred* did not refer to the Zealots or to any social reforms.[38] Moreover, the *Dialogue Between the Rich and the Poor* of Alexios Makrembolites, in which the plight of the social group from which the Zealots drew their following is heard, constitutes no revolutionary manifesto, since it proposes no change to the existing order. Although the social and political role of Palamism needs further elucidation, it is, in the view of Byzantinists, surely excessive to try to construct a revolutionary programme out of this theological controversy, especially with an eye to contemporary problems.[39] Nor, in turn, is the issue of feudalism in Byzantium necessarily a straightforward one; and the importance of communalist tradition in Byzantium and later under Ottoman rule should not be overstated and idealized as a solution to contemporary problems. According to Nikos Svoronos, this form of social organization cannot be revived in the modern Greek state as an alternative democratic way of life in contrast to the centralistic structures based on Western models; in fact, Svoronos questions whether these past communities had a democratic spirit at all.[40] Generally, it is not questioned that the Byzantine tradition has influenced the formation of modern Greek political culture; yet opinions diverge as to the extent to which this influence has taken place and how it is to be interpreted.[41]

In short, Neo-Orthodox ideas in general, and their promoters, have become the focus of serious criticism by theologians and other Orthodox circles,

[37] So S. Agourides in Makris, *Marxists kai Orthodoxia*, 39–40 and *Oramata kai pragmata* (1991), 349–53.

[38] A. Kazhdan and A.-M. Talbot, 'Zealots' and A.-M. Talbot, 'Kabasilas, Nicholas Chamaetos', *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford, 1991).

[39] I. Ševčenko, 'Alexios Makrembolites and the "Dialogue Between the Rich and the Poor"', *Zbornik Radova Srpske Akademije Nauka. LXV Vizantološki Institut*, 6 (1960), 187–228; Kazhdan, 'Palamism. The Dispute over Palamism', *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*.

[40] See K. Th. Dimaras and N. Svoronos, *I methodos tis istorias* (1995), 156–8; also J. Haldon, 'The feudalism debate once more: the case of Byzantium', *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 17 (1989), 5–40.

[41] N. Demertzis (ed.), *I elliniki politiki koultoura simera* (1994), 41–74; see also Caroula Argyriadis-Kervégan's contribution to the present volume (Chapter 4).

as well as by other Greek intellectuals from leftist and other perspectives.[42] This phenomenon, which can be observed today in various forms, is again indicative of the central role of Byzantium in discussions about Greece and its problems of identity and orientation.

University of Thessaly-Volos

[42] The critical literature is immense, and too extensive to be documented here, but a number of articles by prominent intellectuals in the Sunday newspaper *To Vima* provide a useful sample: see those by D. N. Maronitis (16 January 1994), I. K. Pretenteris (20 November 1994), N. Mouzelis (21 and 28 May 1995), and A. Liakos (9 July 1995).

13

The restoration of Thessaloniki's Byzantine monuments and their place in the modern city

Eftychia Kourkoutidou-Nikolaïdou

Byzantine culture, the continuation and development of ancient Greek culture in the intellectual and artistic sphere, merged and assimilated a variety of cultural elements. Firmly rooted in the diverse tradition of Late Antiquity and in the more or less international character of early Christian art in the Mediterranean basin, Byzantine art created a coherent expression and developed a new artistic idiom. This led to a reinterpretation of classical art and at the same time made it possible to express the spiritual content of the new religion and to convey visually such potentially abstruse religious themes as divine visions and manifestations.

The orbit of Byzantine culture transcended the empire's boundaries to east and west, enthralling the surrounding peoples, friend and foe alike. Few of them were cultivated enough to appreciate it fully, but they all learnt from it. Orthodox Christianity and Thessaloniki together played a decisive part in Byzantium's educational role in the Slavonic world.

Byzantine Thessaloniki, the *symbasileuousa*, second city after Constantinople in the European part of the Byzantine empire, not only had a special role in the empire's political organization but was also a lively intellectual and artistic centre. The wealth and variety of ideological currents and artistic trends that came together at this Balkan crossroads gave Byzantine Thessaloniki a distinctive profile all its own and enhanced its special influence in the Slavonic world and the Balkans as a whole.

With its monuments reflecting the evolution of Byzantine art over the centuries, Thessaloniki today is a kind of open-air museum of Byzantine history and art, operating in conjunction with the new Museum of Byzantine Culture.[1] These monuments deserve special treatment by the state and

[1] E. Kourkoutidou-Nikolaïdou, 'A Museum is Born: Aims and Orientations', *Museum of Byzantine Culture*, 1 (1994), 14–20.

the local people in the light of worldwide efforts to preserve the cultural heritage.[2] In the history of the conservation and restoration of the city's monuments in the twentieth century, it is interesting to see how the various approaches that have been tried reflect theoretical and methodological suppositions and the practices followed in traditional restoration. The history of the restoration of Thessaloniki's Byzantine monuments may be divided into four periods, each offering its own clear and distinctive picture of the monuments concerned and the restoration techniques used.

Late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, European travellers were publishing travel accounts, and European Byzantinists and a few Greek scholars produced the first scholarly monographs and articles about the monuments of Thessaloniki. These aroused considerable interest, and the new awareness of the monuments prompted the Ottoman authorities to start restoring them, under the supervision of the researchers themselves. This sensitivity was part of the general trend towards renewal and 'Europeanization' in the Ottoman state at the time. The trend manifested itself in efforts to smarten up the city, including, for instance, the demolition of the east wall and the sea wall to make way for broad thoroughfares. The restoration work carried out on Hagia Sophia in Constantinople seems to have reflected similar trends.[3] Between 1907 and 1912, Thessaloniki's most important Byzantine monuments underwent extensive restorations, and after the city's liberation in 1912 the work was continued by the Greek administration until 1914.[4]

Following the discovery and restoration of the mosaics in the dome of Hagia Sophia, Thessaloniki, repairs were carried out in various parts of the monument's interior. These were accompanied by an ambitious project to embellish and develop the building with the addition of Ottoman architectural features, which distorted the form of the monument and were sharply criticized by the Byzantinist Charles Diehl.[5]

In the Acheiropoietos, the interventions carried out at this time were mainly a matter of consolidation work, as also of the restoration of original forms and large-scale restructuring. Less extensive work was done in the Church of St Demetrius, where the wall mosaics were uncovered, the

[2] G. P. Lavvas, 'I synantisi tou politi me tin politistiki klironomia', *Ikonomikos* (7 December 1995), 65–7.

[3] C. Mango, *The Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul* (Washington, 1962), 11–12.

[4] K. Theocharidou-Tsaprali and C. Mavropoulou-Tsioumi, *I anastilosi ton vyzantinon kai metavyzantinon mnimeion sti Thessaloniki* (1985), 8–17.

[5] K. Theocharidou, *The Architecture of Hagia Sophia, Thessaloniki, from its Erection up to the Turkish Conquest*, BAR International Series, 399 (1988).

catholicon of Vlatadon Monastery, to which the south portico and the west propylon were added, and St Panteleimon, where the portico surrounding the church was removed.

Very little written documentation survives relating to the work done on Thessaloniki's monuments in this early period. Modern researchers may perhaps glean more information from the monuments themselves in the course of detailed study. The early interventions were chiefly marked by the absence of any specific theoretical grounds for the solutions adopted. On the one hand, there was a strong movement towards 'purity', evidenced by efforts to restore original forms; these efforts were often based, however, not on the specific features of the monument itself, but rather on a general knowledge of the architecture of the period to which it belonged. On the other hand, there was a freedom in the interventions and new structures, reflecting the eclectic trends that were a prevalent feature of the city's architecture at that time.

The interwar years

In the period between the First and Second World Wars, the most important work done on Thessaloniki's Byzantine monuments was the first phase of the repairs to the church of St Demetrius, which had been all but destroyed by fire in 1917.[6] The architect Aristotelis Zachos was commissioned to plan the restoration, and this phase was dominated by the solutions he proposed – solutions that brought him into conflict with the Department of Antiquities. Basically, Zachos wanted to rebuild much of the church, replace the fire-damaged architectural members with exact copies, and incorporate the monument into a free reorganization of the surrounding space with new structures for which there was no real justification. In an attempt to apply the theoretical principle that restorations should be clearly distinguishable from the surviving authentic parts of the monument, Zachos opted to use middle-Byzantine *cloisonné* masonry for the rebuilt sections, thus imposing a specific form that was alien both to the monument and to its period.

Within the same period, between 1926 and 1928, Andreas Xyngopoulos did repair work on the Acheiropoietos and cleared away some of the earthfill, discovering the baptistery on the south side of the basilica in the process. Zachos rebuilt the baptistery, again using middle-Byzantine *cloisonné* masonry.

General repairs and consolidation work, with Dimitrios Evangelidis as the archaeologist in charge and Zachos as technical supervisor, were carried out in the church of the Panagia Chalkeon, which suffered some serious cracks as a result of the Ierissos earthquake in 1933. Again, the work sought to

[6] Theocharidou-Tsaprali and Mavropoulou-Tsioumi, *I anastilosi*, 17–29.

restore the 'purity' of the original form, but no attempt was made to distinguish the authentic elements from the restorations.

Lastly, the work done in 1936 in the church of the Saviour was a purely empirical intervention, in which the rebuilding and the new morphological features that were arbitrarily added distorted the monument's authentic historical form.

From 1945 to the 1970s

From the end of the Second World War to the 1970s, restoration work continued on the city's monuments. A bomb had fallen at the base of the dome of Hagia Sophia, but apart from this the monuments had fortunately suffered no damage during the war. Little has been published about the restoration work in this period, but a general inspection of the monuments themselves shows that the quest for 'purity' continued, evidenced by efforts to restore their original form. Extensive rebuilding was done to this purpose, though it was based on a more focused approach to the features and finds offered by the monuments themselves than in the previous period.

In the second phase of restorations in St Demetrius (1945–50), the supervising committee of experts[7] reduced the number of Zachos's replicas of ruined architectural members and decided not to rebuild with *cloisonné* masonry in future.

The work on the churches of St Catherine (1947–51) and the Prophet Elijah (1956–61) was supervised by the Ephor of Antiquities, Stylianos Pelekanidis. His aims were: to consolidate the monuments, both of which (particularly the church of the Prophet Elijah) had statical problems; to restore their Byzantine form, as far as possible; and to articulate the exterior façades with the various morphological features that had been distorted by Ottoman interventions and additions.[8] The resulting restoration was thus the outcome of the restorer's theoretical evaluation and selection of the specific historical phase which he himself regarded as the monument's 'defining moment'.[9]

Together with the consolidation work, a conservation programme was now being applied to the monuments' mosaics and painted decoration, securing them where necessary and cleaning them. The problem of their aesthetic restoration – that is, what to do about the blank spaces left where the painted decoration had been destroyed – was generally resolved by filling the gaps with plaster of a more or less acceptable neutral colour, with

[7] Professors G. Sotiriou, A. Orlandos, P. Paraskevopoulos and A. Xyngopoulos, and the Ephor of Antiquities, S. Pelekanidis.

[8] Theocharidou-Tsaprali and Mavropoulou-Tsioumi, *I anastilosi*, 30–46.

[9] E. Hadzitryfonos, 'Ergasies syntirisis kai apokatastasis stin Ayia Aikaterini Thessalonikis, 1988–1993', *Mnimeio kai perivallon*, 3 (1), (Thessaloniki 1995), 78–88.

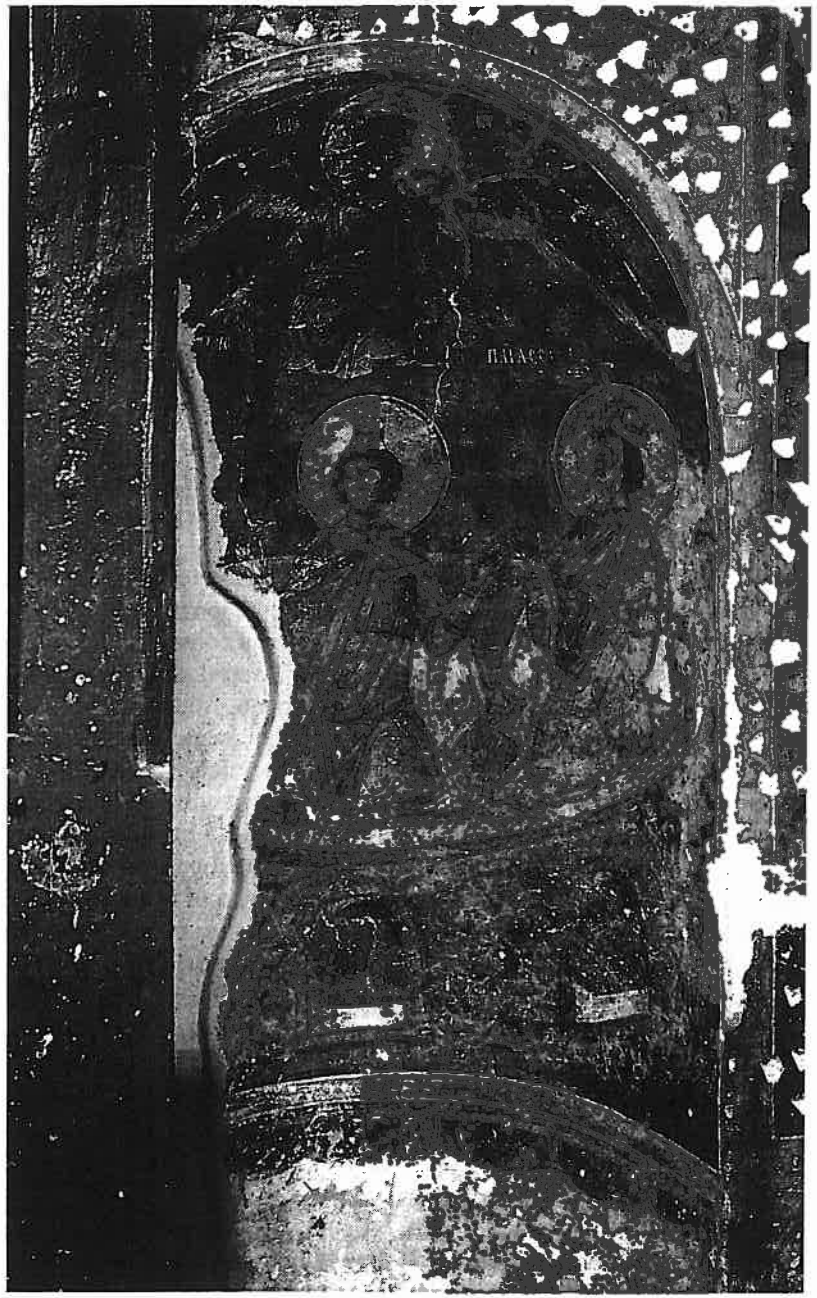

Fig. 13.1 From the Vlatadon Monastery

no attempt to replace what was missing. Only in the badly damaged mosaics in the arches in the south colonnade of the Acheiropoietos was an attempt made, by Giannis Kolefas, to fill the gaps with coloured regatino.

The 1978 earthquake and after

The 1978 earthquake was a turning point in the history of the restoration of Thessaloniki's monuments. The tremor inflicted varying degrees of damage on many of the most important Byzantine monuments, not to mention post-Byzantine, Ottoman and modern structures. In many cases, it exacerbated an already problematic state that was due to the effects of both age and earlier earthquakes, compounded by a lack of systematic conservation over the centuries. Indeed, many of the cracks that appeared on the monuments were found to have been caused by earlier phenomena and had simply been covered over during previous repairs. The Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities in Thessaloniki was thus obliged to take a global approach to the problem of restoring the city's monuments, rather than repairing the recent damage on a piecemeal basis.[10]

This, then, was the guiding spirit behind the theoretical and systematic scientific approach to the problem, which produced a long-term programme involving investigation, documentation, surveys, and consolidation and restoration work. Within this framework, many of Thessaloniki's monuments have already been restored, and work continues on others.[11] The lack of organized documentary archives for the monuments meant that the restoration programme had to start more or less from scratch.[12] Apart from the problems arising out of the lack of a technical infrastructure and specialized technical personnel, the archaeological service was also burdened with the task of persuading the general public and users of the monuments to accept the fact that time had to be spent on the initial stage of investigation and documentation. The service was under intense pressure to start restoration immediately, both because people feared further tremors and destruction,

[10] E. Kourkoutidou-Nikolaïdou, 'Ta vyzantina mnimeia tis Thessalonikis: Provlimata meta tous seismous', *Arhitektoniki klironomia kai mnimeia sti Thessaloniki*, conference proceedings (Thessaloniki, 1983), 125–30.

[11] In addition to individual articles and monographs, brief accounts of the work done on Thessaloniki's monuments since 1978 are published in the *Archaiologiko Deltio, Chronika*; also in the proceedings of the international symposium held in Thessaloniki on 11–13 December 1985, *Anastiloseis vyzantinon kai metavyzantinon mnimeion* (Thessaloniki 1986), and 'Syntirisi kai apokatastasi ton mnimeion tis vyzantinis kai metavyzantinis periodou', *Conservation of the Architectural Heritage*, exhibition catalogue (Thessaloniki, 1994), 244–55.

[12] P. Theodoridis, 'Tekmiriosi ton mnimeion: to paradeigma tis Ayias Sofias', *Provlimata diasosis ton mnimeion tis Thessalonikis kai diatirisis tou istorikou kai fysikou chorou tou Ag. Orous*, proceedings of a two-day meeting (Thessaloniki, 1982), 23–4.

and because they, and especially the church authorities, were naturally anxious to use the monuments right away.

The first surveys were carried out under the guidance of a supervisory team composed of professors from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and staff members of the Ministries of Culture and Public Works.[13] The surveys and the restoration work subsequently became the exclusive responsibility of the Ministry of Culture. The state assumed the whole cost of the programme, with small additional grants from the European Community and the Leventis Foundation.

This new period of restoration of Thessaloniki's Byzantine monuments saw the emergence of a new underlying rationale, accompanied by a different approach to the concept of the historical monument, which determined the investigative methodology, the proposals for restoration, consolidation and rehabilitation, and the proper use of advanced modern technical methods of documentation and intervention. For the first time, the problem of consolidating Thessaloniki's monuments was addressed with a view not to restoring the original 'pure' form but to strengthening the monument's statical factors and enhancing its historical image.

Before the restoration plans were drawn up, but also while the work was in progress, considerable care, attention and scientific knowledge were applied to assembling the data offered by the monuments themselves regarding their original form, the successive building phases or interventions they had undergone, and the materials used in each of these, so that all evidence of their history and their structural evolution could be preserved. Excavations in and around the monuments yielded plenty of further information and shed light on both the form and the uses of the monuments and their immediate surroundings in various periods of history (for instance, the Rotunda, the Acheiropoietos, Hagia Sophia, the Churches of the Holy Apostles and the Transfiguration of the Saviour, the catholicon of the Vlatadon Monastery, the city walls and the Eptapyrgio). An investigation of the plaster revealed hitherto unknown layers of frescoes and mosaics, which furthered our knowledge of the monuments' and the city's historical periods, as also of Byzantine art in general (examples include the churches of the Holy Apostles, the Transfiguration, and Nea Panagia, and Vlatadon Monastery). Each monument was thus approached as the sum total of the various phases that made up its historical stratification, which latter had to be documented and preserved.

These interdisciplinary investigations and documentation, which made it possible to reconstruct the monuments' histories, were followed by the important stage of diagnosing the condition and pathology of each and

[13] E. Kourkoutidou-Nikolaïdou, 'I antimetopisi tis stereosis ton mnimeion tis Thessalonikis meta tous seismous', *Provlimata diasosis*, 16–19.

performing a statical analysis.[14] Restorers work on the principle that the solutions they apply must be based on an accurate diagnosis of what has caused any specific symptom of damage, so this stage involves a complex interplay of scientific disciplines, specialized investigations, modern technology (rebound hammer testing, core-taking procedures and so on), together with the use of non-destructive investigation methods that are still in their infancy (thermography and ultrasound, for instance). Statical analysis is one of the most difficult problems, both because of the difficulty of establishing a mathematical model, particularly for Byzantine vaulted structures, and because of the building materials and their state of preservation, which require different computations from modern materials.

The appropriate consolidation solution is then selected, based on the findings of the detailed investigation, documentation and statical analysis. For the past fifteen years or so, the philosophy behind the restorations in Thessaloniki has centred on the principles of non-invasive intervention, reversible solutions, and the use of traditional materials for grouting and pointing.[15] The aim is to avoid the risk of excessive reinforcement that would upset the statical equilibrium the buildings have achieved under the stresses and strains of so many centuries. It is no less important to preserve the evidence for all the monuments' historical phases, which is equally jeopardized by drastic restoration interventions. Certainly, where there is no alternative, reinforced materials are used; as, for instance, in the little church of the Transfiguration of the Saviour, which was built using not mortar but plain earth. It has also been necessary to implement non-reversible solutions in some cases, such as strengthening walls with rods of stainless steel or titanium incorporated directly into the masonry. In at least three of Thessaloniki's Byzantine monuments – Hagia Sophia, the Acheiropoietos, and, to a certain extent, St Panteleimon – the originally approved statical survey was not implemented in its entirety, but was revised along the way in favour of less invasive interventions and fewer irreversible solutions.[16] At all events, the general theory of restoration that has been applied to Thessaloniki's monuments since the 1978 earthquake is that consolidation work no longer seeks either to restore a building's original, 'pure' forms or to restore it to its original static model, but rather aspires to strengthen and support its statical sufficiency in the context of the statical equilibrium it has attained over years of repairs and intervention.

[14] K. Theocharidou, 'Syntirisi mnimeion kai provlimata stin efarmogi ton meleton', *Provlimata diasosis*, 25–8.

[15] P. Astrinidou-Kotsaki, 'To mnimeio kai i eikona tou: Apokatastaseis stin Agia Sofia Thessalonikis', *Mnimeio kai perivallon*, 67–77.

[16] G. Penelis, 'Synoptiki parousiasi tis methodologias meletis kai erevnas pou akolouthithike gia ti stereosi tis Rotondas Thessalonikis', *Provlimata diasosis*, 78–97; G. Penelis, 'Kataskevastiki anastilosi I. N. Acheiropiitou Thessalonikis', *Mnimeio kai perivallon*, 102–9.

Another major factor in the process of restoring the monuments is the conservation of their decoration – that is, the frescoes, the wall mosaics and the marble revetment, which often present more problems and exhibit more damage than the masonry itself. When the problems of conserving decoration are compounded by serious statical problems, as is the case with Thessaloniki's monuments, then the various stages of consolidating the masonry and conserving the painted surfaces have to be planned very carefully, with total respect for both types of problem and close collaboration between the scientific disciplines and technical working parties involved.[17] The presence of painted decoration may often determine or alter the originally proposed solution to the statical problem.

When there is a risk that the substances used to impregnate the walls will permeate the plaster directly under the painted surface, the frescoes must first be conserved and secured, as was done in the dome of the church of the Transfiguration and in St Panteleimon. By the same token, the substances injected to secure the painted surface may leak into the cracks in the masonry, filling them with unsuitable material; in this case either the masonry must be impregnated from outside the building before the painted surface is conserved, or the cracks be temporarily blocked until the conservation of the painted decoration is complete. Both methods were used in the dome of the Rotunda. In other cases, the paintings simply have to be detached from the walls and replaced after the consolidation work has been done. This process was resorted to for the mosaics in the three large barrel-vaults around the perimeter of the Rotunda. In this case, a strictly predetermined programme was followed, whereby the mosaics were carefully documented, detached, and placed on wooden replicas of their respective barrel-vaults. The conservation work was done there,[18] and after the masonry had been consolidated the mosaics were restored with great care and precision to their original sites. Fortunately, this complicated procedure did not have to be repeated with the mosaics in the Rotunda dome, nor in the dome of Hagia Sophia, where an equally laborious and lengthy process of *in situ* consolidation was applied.

Having outlined the history of the restoration of what is Greece's largest single collection of Byzantine monments, one should now draw attention to their place in the modern city. One important aspect of the whole issue of increasing awareness of the Byzantine monuments is the attitude both of

[17] C. Mavropoulou-Tsioumi, 'Syntirisi esoterikou diakosmou mnimeion: Allilexartisi me ti stereosi tou ktiriou', *Provlimata diasosis*, 20–22.

[18] E. Kourkoutidou-Nikolaïdou, 'Ta psifidota tis Thessalonikis kai o Yannis Kolefas: Ena chroniko tis syntirisis ton psifidoton tis Thessalonikis meta tous seismous tou 1978', *Yannis Kolefas*, Festschrift (1990), 32–51.

the state and of modern society towards monuments and their role in modern cities.

Throughout the ages, human beings have freely intervened in the environment they have inherited, reshaping it in accordance with their own needs and their own aesthetic values. Since they have always had the same basic point of departure (the human scale), these interventions have maintained the ratio between the monument and the built or open living space around it. However, losing sight of the natural, human, spatial scale within a matter of a few years, the modern city has not only deprived people of their vital links with the environment, but also isolated the monuments from the setting that their own thousand-year life and human interventions had created around them. Change in the modern city no longer creeps up imperceptibly; it is not gradually assimilated. Rapid changes create permanent distortions in the city's profile, creating a new framework in which modern people shape their own lives. In our strenuous efforts to preserve and restore the monuments and to give them back their lost multiple functions, we are swimming against the tide of this ineluctable progress. They were focal points in the life of the city and fundamental elements in its spatial organization for hundreds of years – yet what do the monuments stand for in Thessaloniki today? The question has moved outside the narrow circle of specialists and experts and become a social issue – even, according to one broader view, a political one, since its resolution directly affects (for better or worse) the lives of the city's inhabitants, and the ultimate decisions must be political ones.

The question is a crucial one for the choices and decisions to be made along the way. Are we to exclude these unique monuments from the life of the modern city, leaving them as isolated pockets of tradition in the adulterated historical centre? Are we to treat them as museum pieces or art works that we respect but never spare a thought for? Are we going to cling to a sentimental, nostalgic attitude towards them, as being among the few surviving features of the old city? Or are we to pursue the possibilities of re-animating them by means of the same or new social functions, and thus give them back their organic role in the life of the city and use them to improve the quality of that life?

There are two aspects to the problem: how to incorporate the monuments into the urban fabric of the modern city; and how to ensure that they may function as independent cultural entities. A clear-eyed, critical scrutiny of modern Thessaloniki reveals that the modern town plan has proved quite incapable of integrating the monuments and making them a natural part of the modern environment. In most cases, they have been left stranded in the middle of squares, like decorative features left over from another era, surrounded by apartment blocks and with the encircling road traffic playing its part in the desertification of the modern city. The lack of any cultural

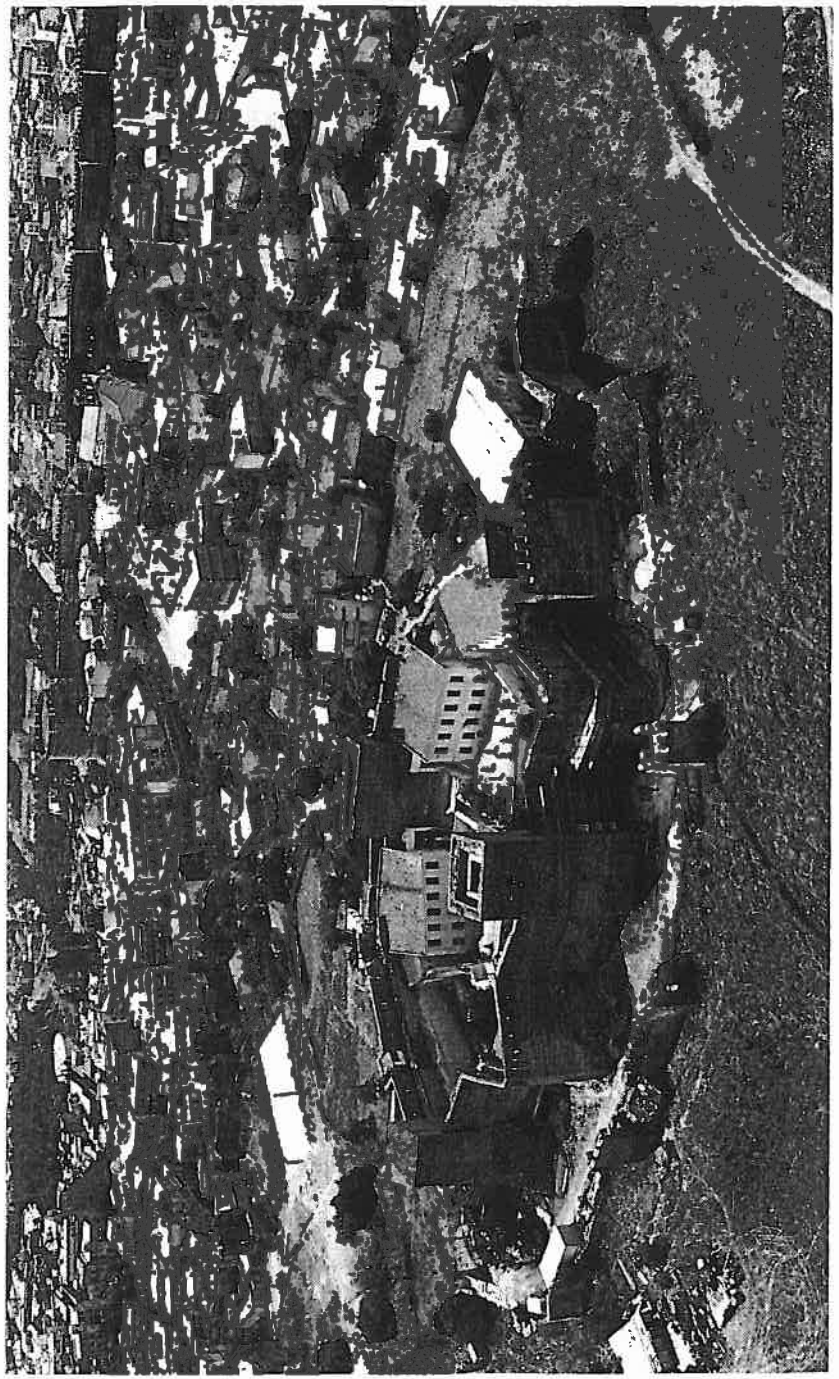

Fig. 13.2 Eptapyrgio

planning by the state, combined with extraneous conflicting economic interests, means that there have never been any measures to control the building of large structures around the Byzantine churches.[19]

It is proving no less problematic in practice to renew the use and functions of the monuments. With regard to the Byzantine and post-Byzantine churches, the solution may seem relatively easy, since, as places of worship, they retain their original use. In everyday practice, however, there is a questionable attempt to offset practical needs (as perceived, at least, by the clergy) against the fundamental requirement that the aesthetics of the monument and its historical form be respected.[20] Apart from this, there is also the question of enhancing the churches' role in the modern city.[21] Formerly centres of religious and intellectual life, foci, together with their adjacent structures, of the city's communal and social life, they are now exclusively places of worship. The inability to restore their multiple independent functions of yesteryear is a complex problem of the modern Church and of Greece's spiritual life more generally. It goes without saying that any attempt to restore the multiple functions of the Byzantine and post-Byzantine churches must in turn respect the living space and the surrounding atmosphere that gives each one its individuality and its own distinctive profile. It is with this in mind that efforts have recently been under way to develop the immediate environs of the city's monuments with non-invasive interventions in keeping with the timeless presence and life of each monument. This development was part of the general preparations for Thessaloniki's role as Cultural Capital of Europe in 1997 and its success or otherwise will have been judged in that context.

One major monument that presents particularly complex problems with regard not only to its restoration but also to its future uses and function is the Eptapyrgio, an imposing fortress in the highest part of the citadel. From the nineteenth century, the Eptapyrgio was used as a prison, both for regular offenders and for political prisoners at such crucial points in the nation's history as the German occupation, the Civil War, and the dictatorship of 1967–74. All the inmates were relocated in 1989, whereupon the Ninth Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities undertook to survey and restore the monument and to offer planned proposals for its use and its reintegration into the life of the city. The monument's importance, the role it has played in modern Greek history, and the emotional charge which that role carries

[19] E. Kourkoutidou-Nikolaïdou, 'I thesi ton mnimeion mesa sti synchroni Thessaloniki: Protaseis gia axiopoiisi', *Archaiologia*, 7 (1983), 38–42.

[20] In recent years the Church has made unauthorized interventions in such important monuments as the Rotunda and the church of St Demetrius, thus distorting their historical form and assailing their aesthetic integrity.

[21] N. Ioannidou, 'O rolos ton mnimeion mesa stin poli', *Provlimata diasosis*, 29–35.

for a large segment of society all make for a highly involved situation, many aspects of which have yet to be resolved.

From the way in which all the problems have been addressed, it will be clear that since 1978 priority has been given to the restoration and conservation of the monuments, showing respect for their eventful life and history. At the same time, it is clear that the monuments themselves have often been thoughtlessly treated by their users, as have the surrounding areas by the various public services responsible for them. The problem must be addressed so that solutions can be found before it is too late. The questions that have been asked have shown that the solutions are neither the privilege nor the responsibility of any single scientific discipline: many specialized fields, many agencies, indeed all of us are involved. Above and beyond any specialized knowledge, the only infallible guide is the secret voice of each monument, which must be heard with love and respect. It may be precisely these emotions that are most sadly lacking today.

Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities, Thessaloniki

14

'Thessaloniki and Life'

Nikos Gabriel Pentzikis,
from Mother Thessaloniki *(1970),*
translated by Leo Marshall

Which view of our city do you like best? From the sea as you approach it from a distance on board ship? That is how we see it at its most imposing. There is an engraving of it like this, one come down to us from an eighteenth-century traveller, a foreigner who viewed it from this side, seeing it the way it was then under Turkish rule with quite a number of minarets.

If someone wanted, in his illustrations for the variously titled novels (which periodically appear serialized in the newspapers) drawing on the historical and in particular the Byzantine past of the city, to include a view of it, I would advise him to get it beyond the third kilometre of the Langadas Road, from where one can just make out behind the hills the top of the Eptapyrgio.

In general the view of our walls from the north and north-west, from the side, that is, on which Ioannis Vatatzes, the Byzantine emperor of Nicaea, would have seen it, when he was coming from the garden of Provatas, where he had made camp, not far from Langadas, to attempt the capture of Thessaloniki, has something very stirring about it, even if most of our painters prefer to depict the eastern side of the fortifications, with the rampart from which the cannon fires for official celebrations, undeterred by the fact that, as history tells us, this probably was the vulnerable side, and it was from this side that in 1430 the Turks first breached Thessaloniki.

If you do not wish to be left exclusively with this conventional postcard view, observe the panoramic view of the town from the east and from the north-west, from the two charming resorts of Arsakli and Oraiokastro respectively.

From Oraiokastro the throng of houses that border the sea, as far along as the estuaries of the rivers and the recent deposits of alluvial silt, comes into view against a colour of deep violet, beyond an expanse of farmland in the foreground, which is dominated by orange. By contrast, in the view of

Thessaloniki from Arsakli orange predominates from the College down as far as the sea, while dominating the foreground are patches of dull green land. But finer than either of these views of Thessaloniki, which look down on the city from a height, and most spectacular in autumn, the most beautiful season in Thessaloniki, and at dusk, when the clouds are painted magenta by the setting sun, making the horizon above Pieria incandesce, so that we recall the image Goethe gave to the sunset, in which high in its fiery clouds he has an eagle's wings catch fire, is the view mainly of the city's central section, as it presents itself to our eyes, when, having taken the bus for the slaughterhouses, we get off at Sokoni, and turn a little and look back.

As a symphony of differing colour values, this view dominated by the beauty of the purple sky, with scudding clouds driven along by sea breezes, which lend to the atmosphere a palpable dampness, making the shadows of the houses on the waterfront seem made of velvet, while the other houses higher up stand out dimly in the dusk, is strongly reminiscent of paintings by Joseph Vernet.

Joseph Vernet, some of whose paintings hang today in the Louvre, is the French painter who in 1753 received an order from Louis XV for a series of views of twenty-four different harbours. It is well known that he proved unable to complete this commission, even though he worked devotedly on it for ten whole years. However fine a thing it may be to paint cities, it is not easy, it frequently presents insuperable problems.

Conscious of these difficulties and himself confronted by them, Theotokopoulos, that great master, did not attempt to portray his beloved second home, Toledo, until the end of his life.

His painting, 'View of Toledo Under a Storm', is widely known.

Less well known is his general view of Toledo, in which the painter's son, Georgis, stands before one side of the landscape, unrolling a plan of the city.

The note by the artist himself on the second of these paintings, in which he outlines the aesthetic considerations that obliged him to move an imposing building, placing it somewhere other than where it actually was – a statement which has often served today as a formal justification for many of the modern aesthetic liberties taken with the object – allows us, above all, to appreciate the full extent of the struggle of the artist, who finally claims this freedom for himself, after having been in head-on collision with the things in the world outside.

No instruction of any kind, whether in geography, in history, or in any other discipline or science, will ever be able to persuade the artist to see his object as an indifferent phenomenon which touches us only and at most through our external needs. First and foremost, he will not even accept that his object can, in relation to the subject, be totally independent. He expresses himself always in the name of a deeper spiritual relationship between subject and object, in the name of a union of the two.

From the sea as you approach it on board ship, from the east or from the north and north-west, from whichever side you see Thessaloniki, if you are to appreciate the picturesqueness of the view, you must, without this suggestion's seeming to you in the least naive, allow your sight to contract a marriage with the character of the town.

When we surrender our sight to a relationship of that sort, the object is given to us not simply as it appears, but charged simultaneously with all the memories of whatever kind that consciousness of it may arouse within us.

That so charged, indeed, and on account of that charge, altered, does that the object that we shall see outside us penetrate and exist inside the subject, is familiar from dreams, from the way, that is, that when we fall asleep we see it emerge, seeking, under the pressure of some primary emotion, to come to the fore again.

In the face of a representation of this sort, however used we may be to letting it slumber, it is impossible for us to remain indifferent, nor is there room for us to doubt and to question, as we do when we seek the reasons for things in external relations, without ever actually confronting the contingent.

Precisely, then, in order to remove something that seemed to him contingent, so he should not let himself be convinced by things but be convinced by himself alone and convince others, did the great artist make the change referred to, obeying aesthetic laws which stand as high above the physical laws of immediate experience as the soul does above the body. We know that the aesthetic law which dictated to him an internal change to the unmediated was found somewhat startling in the land that was his home at the time, but the centuries have vindicated him and, if today we are aware of Toledo, which the late internecine war left grievously changed, and if it retains still a place in our concerns, that is thanks above all to Theotokopoulos.

The process, then, which will allow us to see Thessaloniki requires first of all a discipline which is aesthetic, that is, the perception of some sort of joint product of the internal representations of it generated within each of us as we live out our lives within the framework defined by the city's space.

The difficulty in this regard does not reside only in the fact that no articulated perception of Thessaloniki in these terms yet exists, but much more, so it seems to me, in the fact that there is no town in the Greek polity for which an attempt to focus on it in this way has been made.

When the city first begins its historical life in 315 BC, with the settlement there of the populations of twenty-six minor towns that had existed in the area and been destroyed, a myth proclaims it to have been named after the daughter of a woman who had died giving birth to her and who had been connected to Philip, renowned king of Macedon. At that time, then, whether he adhered to the myth already mentioned, or to the tradition according to which the city was named after Alexander the Great's sister Thessaloniki,

wife to one of the world-ruler's successors, given that kings were often deified and worshipped through marble statues, a citizen of Thessaloniki who sought to find the meaning of his city at its broadest and most general had always clearly before his eyes, in the proportions of these idols, the general picture of his city.

Next to the dance of the anthropomorphic gods, whose origins and development have been investigated, the dance of cities that become statues with human proportions is a feature that will remain fundamental to the formation of Greek thought.

When, after the coming of the Apostle to the Nations, the idols were rejected as being of but vague meaning, because they did not reflect the unity that a greater multitude of souls was seeking, the anthropomorphic conception of the city was still preserved; for the teaching was not against man but for him. It insisted only that, whatever authority human beauty might acquire, it had no meaning in itself, but only in the name of its likeness to God, in whose image it is, so that it was thus that, when he descended to earth, the Almighty himself appeared.

The Thessalonians, to whom the Apostle Paul addressed two of his finest epistles, continued to see their city as a human mother, without sinning when they honoured her with all the epithets made glorious by the old life. They made this change alone to the meaning of their city, that it existed in truth thanks only to its child, the celebrated Demetrius, who was martyred as a man, reproducing, in the true struggle of the spirit, the trial in the earthly life of God made Man.

The great and holy martyr Demetrius the Sweet-Smelling, together with the dense phalanx of other saints who lived out their lives here in Thessaloniki, together moreover with the Mother of God, the Virgin-Mother, jointly interceding, would aid the transformation of the immediate, offering their own passive forms as footsteps, at which, each arriving with his own particular burden, would discover the most dazzling view of the city.

It is on this account that saints are called keepers of a city. On this account that to Thessaloniki is keeper, the Triumphant, the Myrrh-Gushing Demetrius.

There is a fine poem come down to us, attributed to Simeon of Thessalonica, that I quote in full, not because it is supposedly the only one that pairs the name of the Victory-Bearer with that of Thessaloniki – such poems are often to be met with – nor because it is supposedly the best, but because I believe it to be one of the products of our great spiritual heritage to which we can most easily respond today.

Saint Demetrius begins speaking:

> Despair not, my birthplace,
> beset by tyrants,
> from whom deliverance
> through me thou seekest to find;
> for now too shall I ransom
> from sorrows
> and heap Heaven's riches
> and guard and save,
> says Demetrius.

Thessaloniki continues:

> Through thy intercession
> from woe was I rescued,
> under thy wings
> kept safe ever;
> so against all expectation now
> in the midst of afflictions
> wretched and reeling,
> I turn to thee
> and cry out:
> Help me, Demetrius.

Again the saint responds:

> Earth covers me, and the grave,
> but full is the world with my fragrance,
> from sweet perfumes by the grace of Christ.
> Wherefore, fear not, my birthplace,
> possessing me,
> for in Christ shall I trample thy enemies
> and guard thee and save thee,
> who honour me.

The Thessalonians close with a chorus, saying:

> Let the whole territory of Thessaloniki rejoice,
> let godly Thessaloniki be glad,
> for the glorious soldier of Christ
> with thee abides, thy sentry
> and saviour,
> crushing thy enemies,
> heaping riches upon thee,
> and, O, it cries out, in thine honour,
> hail, Demetrius.[1]

In Byzantine art, whether poetry, painting or music, the representation of life is stylized. In other words, the human body, clothes and ornaments, furniture, internal and external spaces, houses and streets, animals and trees,

[1] A poem probably by Simeon of Thessalonica. See Ioachim Iviritis: Ioannis Stavrakis, 'Concerning the Miracles of Saint Demetrius' (Thessaloniki, 1940).

are presented not in the name of whatever value they may have in the present, but as helpful and corroborative intermediaries with the other life.

With the passage of time we have become used to identifying the other life with the world of ideas, which, enfeebled since the French Revolution and supplanted by various monistic doctrines, has come to be shadowy for us and uncertain.

If I were to say that the classical world of ideas differs from that of German philosophy, I know you would agree, recognizing that the myth which underpinned the ancient Greek world is different from the Christian myth that was elaborated on later.

The other life, though, is not a matter of ideas, and if Europe has forgotten that fact, squandering the moral riches of faith, we, who through four hundred years of slavery, without a single resonant or striking idea, have sustained ourselves spiritually, after the loss of every redundant embellishment in Byzantium, with the mere form alone, are in a position to know because we have seen it, seen our life well up again like freedom, with no ideological rhetoric of any kind, because just enduring it has refilled the forms our myth provides for us.

The text I have quoted, taken from the treasure-store of our spiritual tradition, reveals on closer analysis some striking parallels with the way in which many primitive painters see their subject-matter.

Think of the pictures in which, behind the figure of the saint and the action, one sees an entire town faithfully reproduced, the home of the artist as it was when he himself lived and breathed. Think of the figures of the saints themselves, who are shown in contemporary clothes, in surroundings contemporary with those of the artist.

The impression we may carry away with us after a visit to the church of Saint Catherine or that of the Twelve Apostles gives such memories still greater force.

Experts in the field, moreover, have remarked that the Macedonian school of painting, which in Thessaloniki flowered with Panselenos, often seems much like a renascence.

Byzantium, having begun in the catacombs, where for the faithful the spectacle of life, when it is not simply the silence of bones, holds no greater significance than does a jest, reached the point, without ever failing to be true to itself, where it was able to vindicate life, with an imperceptible movement, as in the rosebud before it begins to open.

If you reflect on the verses of Mimnermus:

> brief as for them the time we may enjoy youth's bloom ...

you will appreciate how far it is not only Greek but also quite simply human, the fate that befell Byzantium, dying as it did at the very dawn, as the lives of its people were beginning to stand apart from God, for this process to

continue in the West, where it has reached the autonomy that has brought today's fragmentation.

This death, this extinction of the independence of Greek civilization, every time that, reaching the threshold of externalization, it comes face to face with the fundamental problem for consciousness of the other, is not only something that reveals how organic are its development and evolution, but also something that more effectively explains its resurrection, when, once again, in the fullness of time, the moment has come for new life.

So striking is this process that it is impossible for us to doubt the truth of the central myth of modern Greece, that the king turned to stone will live again.

I am not seeking in any way to make political capital out of the myth, but simply trying to restate, in a more accessible, familiar form, what since the establishment of the church in our city has become ours for ever to hold, consigned to us, in Paul's first Epistle to the Thessalonians:

> But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

When the folk song on the fall of Constantinople relates how, in a voice from Heaven and from an Archangel's mouth, the order came that the celebration of the Divine Liturgy should, within the bounds of the ephemeral, aesthetic understanding of the Spirit, be suspended, it uses, in speaking to the Holy Icons, who hearing wept, to Our Lady, the Virgin herself, who was overcome with pain, roughly the same words – the response to the afflicted:

> Again, given time, given years, they will be ours again.

The drama of the death and resurrection of the Greek world is contained in its entirety in our church.

When one thinks in this way, one realizes what the aesthetic discipline may be that is needed for our eyes to see.

To see the city of many and beautiful churches, which is how it is usually described, the city of St Demetrius, which is how Thessaloniki is also known.

Looking often like this at our city, from Karabournaki, where, most probably at its tip, would have been, according to the archaeologist Romaios, the ancient market town for all the settlements established round about since before Cassander, knowing, while my eye is ranging opposite, that behind me lie Kalamaria and the newer districts over towards the other double bay of Aeneas, and Aretsou on top of the low, undeveloped plateau, up as far as which people usually go for a walk on Sunday, a little further up than the tanneries, to the ruins of the Compagnie Franco-Hellénique, which went out of business, starting from the trees of Kaskarka, going on, past the industrial

zone, as far as the breakwater and the warehouses at the harbour, attempting, before my eye can go further – down the length of the seafront where the sailing-boats anchor in front of the tall buildings – to make out the other districts which I know to be hidden at the back, ascending as high as the villages, to the flanks of the hills of Osios David, locating where, beyond Liberty Square, Vardar Square is, where there was once a royal gateway, the 'Golden Gate' at the starting-point of the Monastiri Road, which, a prolongation of the Via Egnatia, leads out onto Macedonia's rural plain, letting my eye take in the whole expanse, in which the city forms, as it turns, an amphitheatre filled to the top with crowded houses, knowing that behind the ramparts on the crest are also Rodochori and other villages, descending from St Paul and the hospital to the 'Evangelistria', which is situated in the gap that divides the town in two, from the White Tower in, from the White Tower out, going past the open spaces left by the former cemeteries, under the re-afforestation on the hillsides of Seïkh-Sou, catching sight, above Toumba and Charilaou, of the crimson and carnation slopes of the Asvestochori hills, as far as which reach, between patches of dense woodland, the houses of the Exoches district, gliding, round the other side, over the filigree of bays and incursions from the land, with houses and jetties in the sea, till, by the shipyards further down, the 'Luxembourg', which was once a Catholic convent, the Allatini Mill on the bend a little more this way, where, stopping finally to look at the fishermen in front of me, who, leaving their nets, were lighting the lamps on the boats, full of wonder at the Image – of the expansion to which the human form is subject in the sensible – I was left, I confess, almost speechless, just as Christovasilis tells us Koutsogiannis was when he went to Yannina.

Tales of the Fold paints a fairly representative series of pictures of the life of our common people, as they had come to be, under the oppression of slavery in the remote wildernesses of the countryside far from the towns, barely surviving on the memory of themselves, accustomed to situating only a short distance away the various reports of the world that reached them, so that the whole of their environment and they themselves within it became fabulous, became myth.

That this was so, we can see more clearly from the sentence in the *Memoirs* of Theodoros Kolokotronis in which he says that for his contemporaries, before they were awoken by the War of Independence, the village opposite their own might as well have been America.

Vizyinos, too, says much the same through the mouth of that splendid character, his grandfather, in his well-known story 'The One and Only Journey of his Life'.

If we now draw a parallel with other peoples who by common consent are still at the stage of myth, it will, I think, not only make us better able to understand Koutsogiannis's bewilderment when, because his old one had

broken, he went to Yannina to get a new flute, but will also throw more light on Krystallis's exhortation 'To the Eagle' to carry him off to the mountains up high, away from the lowlands and the town, where the poor fellow died at a very young age.

A problem that has been much studied is that of rapid deracination, of the tendency to die very young, seen in the natives of the exotic islands, whose picturesqueness we have been taught to marvel at by the cinema.

The general conclusion reached has been that life for these people becomes insupportable, when through contact with the white man their perception of things changes and they lose their myth.

In the light of this, we may suppose that Krystallis's verses 'To the Eagle' touch us as an expression of the yearning common to all Greeks for the myths that freedom and civilization have led them to lose.

Some time ago, the Symbolist movement in Europe interpreted this yearning as a longing for a return – to the worlds of our childhood years.

Today, having learnt that the appeal, the enchantment, of childhood springs from myth, we know that our yearning goes deeper, to a renewal of our relations with God.

With his mythical flute held to his lips, Koutsogiannis was at rights with God. The fact that with the destruction of its beauty he was obliged to go down to Yannina may be symbolically interpreted as meaning that as civilization advances, the town becomes the source of the mythical flute.

Living in Thessaloniki, we can each have a multitude of distinctive impressions of the meaning that a city has. From this point of view, I consider it to be a truly living University. I believe that no other town in the world can possibly have as much to teach us as it has today. Every city has its particular character. Thessaloniki, though it is not without a long historical past, during the whole of which it has always retained its importance, manifests itself as ceaseless becoming.

It is ugly, they say, and in the same breath they admit that it could well become the most beautiful city of all, for example with the new sea-front boulevard, work on which has already begun. It is a town, they say, that smacks of the East, of Asia, and the like, commenting on impressions of the upper town. It seems they may say, too, that it is like Manhattan in the movies, with the tall, new blocks on the front. They may say its houses are old and dilapidated, unfit for human habitation, without however denying their picturesqueness. Or that it contains too much new building, condemning at the same time the absence in this of any style or character. Perhaps it might be described as a market town, but going towards the slaughterhouses, where the 'Garden of the Princes' used to be, the resemblance to an industrial town is so striking that one is reminded of verses by the Belgian poet Verhaeren. It is at once a great 'VILLE TENTACULAIRE' and a *Bruges la morte*. At the meeting-point of southerly and northerly winds, it is

as hot in a sou'wester as Egypt, but, during the First World War, the Anglo-French suffered from frost-bite in winter. It has clear azure skies like the islands, and its fogs remind one of London. Its bay deep inside the Thermaic Gulf, where vessels from every ocean are moored, very often recalls at twilight inland lakes, like that of Geneva. Romantic when you glimpse it through the trees of Seïkh-Sou, the most suffocating realism is evoked by the view of its suburbs. If from Egnatia you derive an epic inspiration, with the triumphal arch of Galerius, then with Queen Olga Street you talk in a sentimental vein. If there are side-streets that remind you of the serene, petty bourgeois poems of François Coppé, elsewhere your head will begin to ache, as though a corpse has polluted the atmosphere. There are house interiors that recall the settings of Dostoyevsky's novels, while the view of many a house rear transports you to individualistic Scandinavia. All things have a beginning in Thessaloniki, they want to be, to become something, but nothing goes on as it began. Everything is subject to interruption or change. The classicizing turn towards the ancient, the persistent memories of slavery, the arriviste influences of the Occident. A tall house and a vacant space, undeveloped, full of rubble and rubbish. Ruins that don't take you back to the past, but coexist on the same plane as buildings still living. At different stages, time uses one and the same building, which even if it was not in the beginning definitely a temple, was subsequently a mosque, a café, a chemist's, a telephone exchange, tobacco store, restaurant, office, cabaret, and cinema.

My last sentence clearly hints I believe at the building in which the 'Alcazar' is housed in front of the Caravanserai, where necessity forced people to live in crowded conditions.

I insist on expressing myself concretely, for fear that some general idea might make me look conceited, as if I thought I knew what was good and what was bad, forgetful of how severe the strictures Christ applies to our knowledge are, when he says:

> THE SAME STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REFUSED IS BECOME THE HEAD-STONE IN THE CORNER.

Everyone, I think, when he forgets the predicament he is in on his own, seeking to move towards his fellow, completing the movement of his soul within the environment of the city, will have, on account of all the terms in the manifold contrasts we have mentioned, its reality revealed to him, irreconcilable with any of today's theories or ideas, stripped bare to a degree much greater than can be achieved by analysis elsewhere.

That is the lesson Thessaloniki has to teach.

Anyone in a hurry to call the image the city presents chaotic, I would, whilst sympathizing with his reaction, remind him how on catching sight of the passing crowd from a balcony in Sydney, Australia, an aborigine said,

according to the account I read in the *Revue Française de Philosophie*, that the dead were obviously walking in the streets along with the living.

Koutsogiannis, coming away completely overawed, said the town was full of devils.

There is no point, therefore, in giving vent to a reactionary expression of our individuality.

The world was ever full of good and evil.

Let us not forget it for the sake of any kind of utilitarianism, in the name of any idea of progress and the like.

These are all mere embellishments aiming to conceal our nakedness in the face of God. They are all admirably characterized by St John Chrysostom in his address to Eutropius:

> IT WAS EVER NIGHT AND A DREAM, AND WITH THE COMING OF DAY IT DISAPPEARED; IT WAS SPRING FLOWERS, AND WITH THE PASSING OF SPRING ALL OF THEM WITHERED; IT WAS SHADOW, AND IT PASSED OVER; IT WAS SMOKE, AND IT WAS DISPERSED; IT WAS A BUBBLE AND IT BURST; IT WAS A SPIDER'S WEB, AND WAS TORN ASUNDER: WHEREFORE WE SING THESE SPIRITUAL WORDS SAYING OVER AND OVER AGAIN. Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.

It would not of course be fitting for me to dare to repeat these words, had we not, all of us, been brought up with the Greek language, which is acknowledged to have glorified the Son of Man, had we not grown up with hope in the Lord, who inspired the achievements of our ancestors, so that their buildings are a true sign of Divine Grace, which is given to man that his life should be lit through with virtue.

Walk downcast 'on the shore of the harvestless sea' and if in humility, forgetting yourself, you love, you may be sure that God will send you, with the things cast up by the sea, on a wave of his love, what is needful.

To such gifts the old churches bear witness, many of them in our city. Keeping this in mind, read on the windows of the church of the Prophet Elijah the inscriptions carved in the marble:

> I shall not die, but live.
> The Right Hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass.

THE MIGHT OF THE RIGHT HAND OF THE LORD so brought it about on Skiathos, that there was found some years ago, in a tree, a heavenly icon, the miraculous Panagia Kounistra. More recently, at a time of grave afflictions, it caused to appear, faintly outlined on the cheap glass in the window of a house in our city, the image of the Mother of God, which was rightly installed in the restored church of our city's Protector.

May each, according as he wishes, be so honoured of God, in our city and in the whole world.

Index

Abydos 128
Adramyttion 128
Adrianople 16
Aegean 12, 135
Agapitos, Panagiotis 53, 107, 117
Agourides, Savvas 142
Agra, publisher 66–8
Agrafa 17
Agrostis, publisher 67–8
Ahrweiler, Hélène 25
Aïma, heroine of *The Gypsy Girl* 95
Akathist Hymn 31
Akropolis, newspaper 93, 94
Alexander the Great 16, 17, 170
Alexandria, Alexandrian 32, 71, 105–7, 112, 120, 136
Alexandridis, Dimitrios 13
Alexios I Komnenos, Emperor 8, 65, 76, 113, 120, 121, 122–3, 125–9
Alma-Tadema, Sir Lawrence 69
Alp Arslan, Sultan
Amantos, K. I. 21, 22
  Prolegomena to the History of the Byzantine Empire 22
Anastasius the Librarian 79
Anatolia 134, 135, 139
Andronikos I Komnenos, Emperor 50
Andronikos III Palaiologos, Emperor 114
Angelopoulos, Lycourgos 93
Anglican Church 101
Ankara 134, 135
Ann of Savoy, Empress 114
Antioch 32
Aphrodite 106
Apollo 98, 103
Apollonios 52
Apulia 19
Aquinas, Thomas 147
Aramaic 20
Archimedes 82
Arethas of Caesarea 20–21
Aristotle 3, 12, 13, 23
Arles 82
armatoloi 17
Armeniak theme 20
Armenians 4, 20
Artemis 95
Arvanitaki, Eleftheria 125
Asia Minor 15, 20, 21, 22, 65, 112, 113, 120, 122–3, 127–8
Athanasios I, Patriarch of Constantinople 38
Athanasius of Klysma, St 22
Athena 107–8
Athenian, Athens 16, 17, 19, 20, 32, 68, 75–6, 82–3, 85–9, 102, 105–7, 120, 139
  Academy 136
  Acropolis 16, 83, 108, 134
  Agora 83
  Byzantine Museum 101
  Christian Archaeological Society 101, 102
  French Institute 135
  Gennadius Library 133
  Hymettus 83
  National Archaeological Museum 101
  National Library of Greece 21, 76
  Parthenon 32, 83, 87, 107–8
  Panteion University 143
  Society for the Distribution of Helpful Books 20
  Syntagma Square 136
  Theseion, church of St George 83
  University 19, 32, 123
    Theological School 101
Athonite, Athos 141, 142–3, 145
  Grigoriou Monastery 143
  Iviron Monastery 143
  Stavronikita Monastery 143
Attaleiates, Michael, *Historia* 121
Aydin 19

Baanes 21
Balkans, Balkan Peninsula 15, 22, 30, 74, 120, 122, 125, 155
  Balkan Wars 33, 111
Basil I, Emperor 112
Basil II, the Bulgar-Slayer, Emperor 7, 15, 61, 106–7, 120, 121–2, 127, 128
Basil of Caesarea, St 82
Basilakios 20
Basilics 30, 40, 44
Bavaria, Bavarian 15, 16, 33, 149; *see also* Otho I
Belisarius 7
Berlin 21
Bessarion, Cardinal 98
Blondel, David 80
Botaneiates, Theophylact 122
Breck 3
Britain 112
Bruges 177
Bryennios, Nikephoros 128
Bryer, A. A. M. 25
Bulgar, Bulgaria, Bulgarian 18, 30, 31, 119, 121–2
Bulwer-Lytton, Edward George Earle 77
Bursa, *see* Prousa
Bute, Lord 76

Calabria 19
Capodistrias 36, 125
Cappadocia, Cappadocian 19, 20, 135, 137–9
Cassander 175
Catherine the Great 7, 22
Catholic, Catholicism 10, 14, 80, 85, 92, 145
Cavafy, C. P. ix, 66, 71–2, 105–6, 109–17, 125, 134, 135, 137
  'Anna Comnena' 110, 112
  'At Epiphany' 110, 114
  'Byzantine Days' 109
  'Byzantine Nobleman in Exile' 113
  'Exiles' 110, 112
  'From the Unpublished History' 110, 114
  'Imenos' 110, 113
  'In Church' 109, 132
  It's Taken' 110, 113
  'John Kantakouzenos Triumphs' 110, 114
  'Manuel Komnenos' 109, 110, 111
  'Of Coloured Glass' 110, 114, 115–17
  'The Patriarch' 110, 114–15
  'Theophilos Palaiologos' 110, 113
  'Those who Fought for the Achaean League' 113
Cedrenus, *see* Kedrenos
Chaeronea, Battle of 1
Chalkidon 19
Chania 123
Chantzeris, Samouil 4
Charlemagne 148
Chios, Chiot 120
Choniates, Niketas 111
Christidis, V. E. 117
Christomanos, Konstantinos 133
Christou, Panagiotis 142
Christovasilis, Christos 176
Cocteau, Jean 133
Comnena, Anna 66, 76, 125, 126, 128, 129
  Alexiad 6, 112, 121, 127, 129
Comnene, Comnenian, imperial dynasty and period 26, 27, 31, 69, 76, 120, 124, 126, 127
Constantine I, the Great, Emperor 2, 4, 6, 12
Constantine I, King of Greece 111, 114
Constantine XI Palaiologos, Emperor 12
Constantinople, Constantinopolitan 4, 5, 13, 16, 19, 25, 30, 31, 32, 33, 50, 56, 65, 76, 84, 93, 94, 98, 101, 103, 105, 107, 108, 113, 114, 116, 120, 134–9, 175
  Chora monastery (Kariye Camii) 134, 136–9
  Hagia Sophia 21, 32, 156
  Heptalophos 17
  Pera 19
  Vlacherna palace 134
Coppé, François 178
Corfiot, Corfu 17, 23
Corvinus, character in *Pope Joan* 82
Cretan Renaissance 56
Crete 16, 56
Crimea 16
Crimean War 31
Crusaders 18, 120, 127
Crusades 109, 123
  First Crusade 76, 126
Ctesiphon 32
Cyprus 23, 64, 131, 134

Dalassene, Anna 110, 125–8
Damanaki, Maria 125
Danish dynasty 33
Dante 87
Dapontes, Kaisarios
  Book of Kingdoms 5
  Garden of Graces 4
Deffner, Michael 58
Delta, Penelope ix, 32, 119–23, 129
  The Collapse 119, 121, 122–3, 129
  For the Homeland 119, 121–2

  In the Time of the Bulgar-Slayer 119, 121–2
Demetrius, St 85, 172, 175
demotic, demoticism 17, 58, 60, 61, 120, 121, 129
Denisi, Sofia 78, 94
Dewing, H. B. 66
Diehl, Charles 156
Digenes Akrites 106, 129, 135
Dimaras, K. Th. 1, 8, 54, 94
Diogenes 12
Dionysios IV Mouselimis, Patriarch of Constantinople 5
Dionysus 106
Dometios, character in *The Gypsy Girl* 96
Dostoevsky, Fyodor Mikhailovich 178
  Crime and Punishment 102
Douka, Maro ix, 65, 119–20, 123–6, 128–9
  A Cap of Purple 120, 123
Doukai, imperial dynasty 127
Doukas, Andronikos 20
Doukas, Konstantinos 126
Doukas, Neofytos 51, 55
Dragoumis, Ion 121
  Blood of Martyrs and Heroes 119
Du Cange, Charles 52, 53
Dyrrachion 120, 122

Ecumenical Church and Patriarchate (of Constantinople) 4, 10, 102
Egypt, Egyptian 21, 103, 105, 106, 120, 136, 178
Ekdawi, Sarah 109, 110
Elijah 85
Elytis, Odyseus 105, 132, 133
  To Axion Esti 132
Embiricos, Andreas 67, 133
Encyclopédie 9
England, English 67, 73, 75–6, 82, 110, 120
Engonopoulos, Nikos 133
Enlightenment viii, ix, 3, 6, 8, 14, 16, 27
Ephesus 135
Epidaurus Constitution 13
Epirus 22, 112
Erofili 56
Erotokritos 52, 133
Europe, European 2, 11, 12, 13, 29, 30, 32, 37, 41, 43, 44, 54, 88, 91, 93, 103, 144, 146, 156, 161, 166, 174, 177

Fallmerayer, Jakob 15
feudalism 147, 152
First World War 33, 129, 157
Florence
  Council of (1439) 98
  Platonic Academy 97
France, French 14, 43, 45, 67, 73, 75, 80, 110, 120, 121
  French Revolution 8, 11, 16, 174
Frank, Frankish 3, 4, 11, 95, 102, 128, 148
Frankfurt 120
Frumentius, character in *Pope Joan* 82–3

Galanaki, Rhea, *The Life of Ismail Ferik Pasha* 124
Gatsos, Nikos 133
Geneva 178
George, St 106
Georgillas 52
German, Germany 29, 35–6, 38, 45, 83, 86, 101, 112, 166, 174
Giannaras, Christos x, 141, 143, 145, 146–9
  Orthodoxy and the West 92
Gibbon, Edward 9, 13, 16, 17, 49, 50, 76, 109, 114, 115
Goldsmith, Oliver, *History* 13
Golindouch, St 22
Gontikakis, Vasilios 143
Goulandris-Horn Foundation 64
Graikoromaios 9, 10
Graikos/Graikoi 9, 10, 50
Great Idea 22, 26–8, 32–3, 54, 86, 111–13, 117, 124
Greek Anthology 71
Gregoras, Nikephoros 115
Gregory V, Patriarch of Constantinople 11
Grottaferrata 18

Haas, Diana 105, 110
Hagarenes 21
Harmenopoulos, Constantine 36–41, 43–5
Hatzidakis, G. N. 49, 55–61
  Einleitung in die neugriechische Grammatik 59
Hellas 11, 51, 65
Hellene, Hellenic, Hellenism 3–4, 7–8, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22–3, 28–30, 50, 54, 65, 69, 74, 83, 86, 88, 93, 97, 98, 100, 106, 124, 131–2, 134, 135, 138–40, 144, 149, 150
Heptalophos, *see* Constantinople
Heptanese 18
Hera 103
Heracles 106
Heraclitus 148
Herodotus 78
Hesiod 61
Hesychasm, Hesychast 147–9, 151
Hexabiblos 36, 38–40

Hobhouse, John Cam 2, 3
Holland 6
Homer, Homeric 13, 71, 150
Iliad 83
Humanism 98

Iberian peninsula 16
Iconium 128
Iconoclasm 28, 83, 89
Ierissos 157
Independence, War of 1, 36, 37, 45, 50, 53, 77, 108, 143, 176
Inquisition 148
Ioannina 5, 16
Ioannou, Giorgos 71
Iorga, Nicolae 30
Irene, Empress, wife of Alexios I 112
Irene, Empress, wife of John VI 115
Isaakios II Angelos 50
Isaris, Alexandros 67
Italian, Italy 19, 67, 73, 96
Italic dialect 60

James, Henry 67
Jassy, Treaty of (1792) 7
Jean de Mailly, *Universal Chronicle of Metz* 79
Jew, Jewish 4, 103, 108
John I Tzimiskes, Emperor 7, 18
John II Komnenos, Emperor 112, 128
John III Vatatzes, Emperor 169
John V Palaiologos, Emperor 114
John VI Kantakouzenos, Emperor 114–16
Histories 115
John Chrysostom, St 150, 179
Julius Caesar 5
Justinian I, Emperor, Justinianic 16, 40, 44, 46, 114
Jutta, character in *Pope Joan* 82

Kabasilas, Neilos 148
Kabasilas, Nicholas 148, 151, 152
Kalligas, Pavlos 40–44
Kalvos, Andreas 133
Kanaki Editions 68
Kapsanis, Georgios
Karalis, Vrasidas 67, 70–73
Karatheodoris, Konstantinos 121
Kardamitsa, publisher 64
Karolidis, Pavlos 19–20, 32
Katartzis, Dimitrios 5, 7, 8
katharevousa 58
Katrakis, Manos 143
Katsimbalis, George C. 133, 134
Kavvadias, Nikos 67
Kedrenos 107, 121
Kivotos, journal 145
kleft, kleftic 17
Kleidion 122
Kodrikas, Panagiotis 8, 9, 13, 55
Kolefas, Giannia 160
Kolettis, Ioannis 16, 26–8
Kollyvades 148
Kolokotronis, Theodore 150, 176
Komnenos, *see* Comnene
Konstantas, Grigorios, co-author of *Modern Geography* 8
Kontoglou, Fotis viii, 92, 145, 149
Korais, Adamantios 5, 9–10, 12, 14, 49–56, 60–61, 149
Atakta 52
Korama 138
Kosmas Aitolos 3
Kosmatopoulos, A. 66
Kougeas, Socrates B. 20–21
Arethas of Caesarea 20–21
Koutroumbis, Dimitrios 145
Krikos-Davis, Katerina 131
Kritoboulos 19
Krumbacher, Karl 58
History of Byzantine Literature 134
Krystallis, Kostas 177

Laconia 21, 95
Lambakis, Georgios 101–2
Lambros, Spyridon 21
Latins 127
Leake, William Martin 5, 12
Lefkas 19
Leipzig 9
Leo VI, Emperor 39
Leonidas 2
Leventis Foundation 161
Liudprand, Bishop of Cremona 84
Livanis Editions, *see* Nea Synora
London 178
Lorenzatos, Zissimos vii, 92, 101, 134, 138, 139, 145, 149
Lusignans, kings of Cyprus 23

Macaulay, Thomas Babington 17, 77
Macedonia, Macedonian 1, 9, 11, 13, 29, 50, 74, 111, 119–21, 129, 174, 178
Byzantine imperial dynasty 31, 120
Machtos, character in *The Gypsy Girl* 95, 99, 104
Mackeldey, Ferdinand 39
Makrembolites, Alexios 152
Makrembolites, Eustathios, *Hysmine and Hysminias* 69
Makrygiannis, Giannis 133, 150
Oramata kai thamata 143
Malanos, Timos 133
Malek Shah, Sultan 20

Manhattan 177
Manuel I Komnenos, Emperor 111
Manzikert 122
Marbois, Sophie de 101
Markopoulos, Giannis 143
Martin Polonus, of Troppau 83
Chronicle of Popes and Emperors 79
Marxism 142, 144
Matsas 133
Matsoukas, Nikos 142
Mavrofrydis, D. I. 54
Maximus the Confessor, St 150
Medici, Cosimo de 97
Mehmet V, Sultan 19
Meroe 16
Metochites, Theodore 138
Ethikos e peri paideias 68
Michael III, Emperor 113
Michael VIII, Emperor 107
Miltiades 13
Mimnermus 174
Missolonghi 106
Mitteis, Ludwig 46
Monemvasia 95
Montesquieu 9, 14
Researches into the Progress and Fall of the Romans 9
Morea 15
Moskof, Kostis 141, 146
Mourouzis, Alexandros, ruler of Wallachia 11
Munich 19

Naples 18
Narses 7
National Bank of Greece 42
Cultural Foundation 64
Nea Estia 132, 133
Nea Synora, publisher 68
Nellas, Panagiotis 143
Neokaisarefs, Nathanail, *see* Parios, Athanasios
Neo-Orthodox, Neo-Orthodoxy, ix, 141–53
Neophytos Enkleistos 23
Nero 50
New Testament 57, 81
Nietzsche, Friedrich 109
Nikephoros II Phokas, Emperor 18
Nikephoros III Botaneiates, Emperor 113
Nikodimos, Patriarch of Jerusalem 22
Nikodimos Agioreitis 148
Nikon, St 84
Nile 22
Nisiotis, Nikos 142
Nointel, Marquis de 5
Nonnus 74
Norway 32
Notaras, Makarios 148

Ochrid 122
Odessa 22
Oikonomos, Stephen 12
Olga, Queen of Greece 102
Orthodox, Orthodoxy 3, 4, 7, 10, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 25, 28, 31, 35, 37, 45, 74, 82, 84, 85, 87, 91–4, 101–2, 124, 128, 136, 138, 141–52, 155
Oslo 32
Otho I, King of Greece 16, 36
Otto I, Western Emperor 84
Ottoman Empire, Ottoman Turks 7, 10, 15, 16, 20, 25, 35, 36, 37, 40, 46, 49–50, 56, 94, 103, 115, 124, 147, 148, 149, 151, 152, 156, 158, 160
Ouranos, Nikephoros 122
Ouzoi 20
Ovid 70
Oxford Dictionary of Popes 79

Palaiologan dynasty and period 114, 116
'Palaiologan Renaissance' 137
Palamas, Gregory 144, 148, 150, 151
Palamism 152
Palamas, Kostis ix, 32, 106–9, 111, 112, 115, 117, 121, 132, 134, 136
Askraios 61
The Dodecalogue of the Gypsy 108–9
The King's Flute 61, 106–8, 119
Songs of my Homeland 106–7
Palestine 20, 22, 136
Pan 85
Panagia 83, 107–8; *see also* Virgin Mary
Pandectists 46
Pandects 45
Panselenos, Manuel, painter 174
Papadiamantis, Alexandros ix, 30, 32, 91–8, 101–4, 133, 134, 145, 150
pseudonym Bohème 103
The Gypsy Girl 32, 93–101
Lambriatikos psaltis 101
O Kalogeros 102
Oi Emboroi ton Ethnon (The Merchants of Nations) 32, 103
Papadimas, publisher 64
Papadopoulos-Kerameus, Athanasios 21–2
Stachylogia 22
Varia Graeca Sacra 22
Paparrigopoulos, Konstantinos viii, 1, 16–17, 18, 20, 27–33, 53–4, 59, 75, 95, 97, 115
History of the Greek Nation 17, 20, 27, 30–31, 86

Papatzonis, Takis ix, 131–6, 138, 140
'Our glorious Byzantinism' 132
Pappoulias, D. 46
Parios, Athanasios 11–12, 149
pseudonym Nathanail Neokaisarefs 12
Christian Apology 11
Paris 13, 43, 54
Parthians 50
Paspatis, Alexandros 103
Paternal Exhortation 10
Patras 106
Paul the Apostle, St 172, 175
Pelekanidis, Stylianos 158
Pentzikis, Nikos Gabriel x, 67, 132, 141, 145, 149
The Novel of Mrs Ersi 132
Pera, *see* Constantinople
Perdikaris, Michail 13
Pericles 7
Persians 50
Petrarch 80, 87
Phanariots 49–50, 117
Philip of Macedon 170
Philippidis, Daniil, co-author of *Modern Geography* 8
Philokalia 149, 151
Pieria 170
Pikionis, D. 145, 149
Plato 12
Plethon, George Gemistos 23
portrayed in *The Gypsy Girl* 94–100, 104
Poland 8
Politis, Fotos 91
Politis, N. G. 46, 95, 96, 100
Pontic, Pontus 74, 113
dialect 60
Poseidon 12, 85
Potlis, M. 21
Poulos, Kostas 69
Prilep 122
Pringos, Ioannis 6–7
Procopius
History of the Wars 68
Secret History 66, 67, 68, 114
Prodromic poems 52
Prodromos, Theodoros, *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* 69–70
Proskynetarion, of Great Lavra, 4
Protestant, Protestantism 17, 80, 92, 141
Proti, island 20
Prousa 134
Psalidas, Athanasios 11
Psellos, Michael 122, 127
Chronographia 66–73, 121
pseudo-Dorotheos, *Chronographer* 5
Psycharis, Giannis (Jean Psichari) 49, 52, 54–61
Essais de grammaire historique néo-grecque 56, 57, 59
To Taxidi mou 56, 58, 59

Rallis, G. 21, 39
Ramfos, Stelios 92, 141, 146
Rangavis, Alexandros Rizos 19
The Lord of the Morea 77–8
Renan, Ernest 101
Vie de Jésus 87
Renieris, Markos 39
Rhodes 95
Robert Guiscard 76
Rodakis, Periklis 68
Rodokanakis 133
Roïdis, Emmanouil ix, 75–89
Romaic Grammar 19
Romaioi/Romioi (Romeic) 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 50, 149
Roman, Romans, Rome viii, 1ff., 7, 8, 11, 14, 25, 38, 39, 44, 46, 49, 50, 79, 85, 97, 98, 115, 128, 129, 175; *see also* Catholic
Romania, Romanian 30, 133
Romanides, John 142
Romanos I Lekapenos, Emperor 21
Romanos IV Diogenes, Emperor 20, 121, 122–3, 127
Romantic, Romanticism 1, 28, 29, 30, 75
Romany (gypsy) 103
Rose, Jacqueline 100
Ross, Ludwig 16
Royou, R. C. 13
Runciman, Sir Steven 98
Russia, Russian 2, 6–7, 8, 10, 18, 20, 21–2, 102, 141, 145

Sachlikis 52
Saïd Battal 20
St Petersburg 22
Saint-Simon, Claude Henri de Rouvroy, comte de 43
Salona 84
Salonica, *see* Thessaloniki
Samos 4, 16
Samuel, Tsar of Bulgaria 122
Sardanapalus 50
Sathas, Konstantinos *Medieval Library* 21
Savidis, G. P. 133
Savigny, Friedrich Carl von 40, 41
Savvopoulos, Dionysis 141
Ta trapezakia exo 143
Scandinavia 178
Schlumberger, Gustave 121, 129
L'Epopée byzantine 121
Scholarios, George
portrayed in *The Gypsy Girl* 96, 98

Scholasticism 148
Scholiastis 141
Scotland 76
Scott, Walter 75–8
Count Robert of Paris 76
Ivanhoe 76
Second World War 131, 132, 157, 158
Seferis, George ix, 23, 113, 131, 133–40
'The Container of the Uncontainable' 137
Logbook I 137
Logbook III 131, 134, 139
'Memory' 139
'Thrush' 133
Serres 16
Sherrard, Philip vii
Short Chronicles 21
Sichelgaita 76
Sicily 105
Sideri, Aloi 66, 70, 72–3
Siena 80
Simadia, journal 144
Simeon of Thessalonica 172
Sixtina, character in *The Gypsy Girl* 99
Skiathos 93, 179
Skylitzes, John 121
Skopetea, Elli 53
Smyrna 16, 19, 22, 112
Skala tou Vourla (Urla Iskelesi) 135
Socrates 12
Solomos, Dionysios 105, 137
Solon 3
Somavera 52
Sophocles, E. A. 19
Soutsos, Alexander 26–7
Soutsos, Panagiotis 82, 88
Charitini 87–8
Soviet Union 120
Spaneas 52, 57
Sparta 95
Spercheios, river 122
Stachylogia 22
Stackelberg, M. von 3
Stanos, Ioannis 6
Stephanus, Heinricus 53
Stevenson, Robert Louis 67
Strabo 22
Strasbourg 19, 132
Strato, *Musa Puerilis* 71
Svoronos, Nikos 124, 152
Sweden 31
Synaxi, journal 143
Synoro, journal 145
Syria 20, 21, 106

Ta Nea, newspaper 124
Tanizaki, Junichiro 67
Taronites, Ashot 122
Tatakis, V. 145, 149
Tatikios 126, 128
Taygetos 23
Themistocles 7
Theodorakis, Mikis 143
Theodore II Laskaris, Emperor, *On the Names of God* 66
Theodosius I, Emperor 4, 7
Theodotos, character in *A Cap of Purple* 126, 128
Theotokas, Giorgos 91, 132, 145
Invalids and Wayfarers 132
Theotokopoulos, Domenikos 170–71
Thermaic Gulf 177
Thessalian, Thessaly 21, 22
Thessaloniki/Thessalonica x, 16, 41, 122, 144, 155–67, 169–79
Arch of Galerius 178
Aristotle University 161
churches
Acheiropoietos 156, 157, 160, 161
Hagia Sophia 156, 158, 161, 162, 163
Holy Apostles 161, 174
Nea Panagia 161
Osios David 176
Panagia Chalkeon 157
Prophet Elijah 158, 179
Rotunda 163
St Catherine 158, 174
St Demetrius 156, 157, 158
St Panteleimon 157, 162, 163
Saviour 158
Transfiguration of the Saviour 161, 162, 163
Vlatadon Monastery 157, 159, 161
Egnatia 176, 178
Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities 160, 166
Eptapyrgio 161, 165, 166, 169
Museum of Byzantine Culture 155
walls 161
White Tower 176
Zealot uprising 151–2
Thrace 74, 111
Thrylos, Alkis 110
Toledo 170–71
Trebizond 16, 25, 113
Trembelas 134
Thucydides 3, 150
Tourkokratia 26
Triantafyllopoulos, C. 46
Triantafyllopoulos, D. 101–2
Triantafyllopoulos, N. D. 66
Trikoupis, Charilaos 125
Tsarouchis, Giannis 145, 149
Tübingen 19

Turkey, Turks, 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 15, 17, 18, 19, 50, 108, 115, 127–8, 134–5, 139, 169; *see also* Ottoman Empire; *Tourkokratia*

United States of America 19

Valaoritis 32
Valerian, Emperor 20
Varnalis, Kostas 150
Vayenas, Nasos 94
Veati, character in *The Gypsy Girl* 99
Velminnis, Annivas, character in *The Gypsy Girl* 97, 99
Velthandros and Chrysanta 52
Venetian, Venice 97
Venizelos, Eleftherios 33, 111–12, 114, 121, 123, 125
  Venizelist party 120
Verhaeren 177
Vernet, Joseph 170
Victor III, Pope 78
Vikelas, Dimitrios 76
Villehardouin, Geoffroy de 76
Virgin Mary (Mother of God) 3, 82, 103, 137, 172, 175; *see also* Panagia
Vizyinos, G. M. 176
Vlachs 16
Voltaire 9, 14, 16
von Schinkel, Karl Friedrich 16
Voulgaris, Evgenios 11
Vrangis, character in *The Gypsy Girl* 102
Vyzantios, Skarlatos 77
Vyzantis 5

Wheler 84
Whittemore, Thomas 137
Wilamowitz (Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf) 21
Williamson, G. A. 66

Xenos, Stefanos
  Heroine of Greek Independence 78, 87

Yannina 176–7; *see also* Ioannina

Zachos, Aristotelis 157, 158
Zakythinos, D. A. 23, 25
  Le despotat grec de Morée 23
  Metabyzantina kai Nea Hellenika 23
Zambelios, Spyridon 2, 17–19, 22, 53–4, 75, 86–7
  Asmata Dimotika 17
  Byzantine Studies 18, 86
  Italohellenika 19
Zante 97
Zeno the Stoic 12
Zepos, I. and P., *Ius Graeco-Romanum* 21
Zeus 103
Zizioulas, John 142
Zlatarski, Vasil 30
Zouraris, Giannis x, 141, 146, 150–51